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SENATE



SÉNAT

CANADA

DEBATES OF THE SENATE

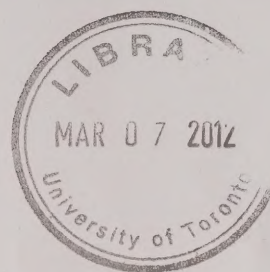
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Tuesday, January 31, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

This issue contains the latest listing of Senators,
Officers of the Senate and the Ministry.

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, there have been consultations among the parties, and it has been agreed that photographers may be allowed on the floor of the Senate for this afternoon's meeting, so that they may photograph the swearing-in of new senators with as little disruption as possible.

[English]

NEW SENATORS

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that the Clerk has received certificates from the Registrar General of Canada showing that the following persons, respectively, have been summoned to the Senate:

Betty Unger
JoAnne L. Buth
Norman E. Doyle
Asha Seth
Ghislain Maltais
Jean-Guy Dagenais

INTRODUCTION

The Hon. the Speaker having informed the Senate that there were senators without, waiting to be introduced:

The following honourable senators were introduced; presented Her Majesty's writs of summons; took the oath prescribed by law, which was administered by the Clerk; and were seated:

Hon. Betty Unger, of Edmonton, Alberta, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Bert Brown;

Hon. JoAnne L. Buth, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Janis G. Johnson;

Hon. Norman E. Doyle, of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Ethel Cochrane;

Hon. Asha Seth, of Toronto, Ontario, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Consigilio Di Nino;

Hon. Ghislain Maltais, of Québec, Quebec, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Michel Rivard; and

Hon. Jean-Guy Dagenais, of Blainville, Quebec, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Claude Carignan.

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that each of the honourable senators named above had made and subscribed the declaration of qualification required by the Constitution Act, 1867, in the presence of the Clerk of the Senate, the Commissioner appointed to receive and witness the said declaration.

• (1430)

CONGRATULATIONS ON APPOINTMENT

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I am pleased to introduce to you six new colleagues as they take their seats in the Senate of Canada.

I have been honoured to be a member of this chamber for almost 20 years, and I have seen many esteemed colleagues come and go. It has always been a pleasure to welcome new senators who are keen and passionate about contributing in various ways to the betterment of our great country, Canada, and today is no different. The wealth of experience these six outstanding Canadians bring to the Red Chamber is, quite frankly, remarkable. From a pioneering medical doctor to a staunch supporter of an elected Senate, I welcome today our newest parliamentarians: JoAnne L. Buth, Jean-Guy Dagenais, Norman E. Doyle, Ghislain Maltais, Asha Seth and Betty Unger.

I know that my colleague Senator Mockler will be very pleased with the background of our newest senator from Manitoba, as she shares his interest in Canadian agriculture. JoAnne Buth brings with her to the upper chamber a significant amount of experience and expertise in the agricultural community and industry. From her studies at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba to her position as President of the Canola Council of Canada, JoAnne has significant roots in one of our country's oldest and most important industries. In fact, she was the recipient of the Manitoba Agriculture "Motivator of the Year" award.

I am pleased to welcome JoAnne to the Senate of Canada. I know that she will lend her passion and interest in Canadian agriculture to the very important work we do here in Parliament.

As most honourable senators have come to realize over the years, I am immensely proud of our Conservative caucus, and I am particularly proud that it includes so many members of Parliament and senators who have experience in law enforcement or who have worked tirelessly on justice-related issues. Among many, we have Minister Julian Fantino, the former OPP commissioner, and our colleague Senator Boisvenu, who has dedicated his life to advocating for victims' rights. Now we can welcome Senator Jean-Guy Dagenais to that distinguished list. A former peace officer with Quebec's provincial police force,

Jean-Guy has also been heavily involved in police association work provincially and federally, in various capacities, most notably elected in 2004 as president of the police association of the province of Quebec.

In recognition of his many contributions to policing in Quebec, Senator Dagenais was made an Officer of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces. Jean-Guy's 40 years of exemplary commitment to public service and policing will undoubtedly be welcome as he takes up his new role here in the upper chamber and as we deal with important legislation with regard to our criminal justice system.

Welcome, Jean-Guy.

Many of us in this chamber on both sides of the aisle have had the great pleasure of working with Newfoundland and Labrador's most recently appointed senator, whether as a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly, the MHA for Harbour Main, or later as the Member of Parliament for St. John's East. I have many fond memories of working with Norman Doyle, including his stint as National Caucus Chair. As senators can imagine, I have worked with many caucus chairs in my 50 years in politics, and I must say that Norm was wonderful in this role, respectful of all points of view, while at the same time ensuring that meetings ran as efficiently as possible. If anybody knows anything about the history of the Conservative Party, that is not always an easy task.

Norm's previous experience in the other place and also in provincial politics will be of great benefit to all of us as we carry out important work in the upper chamber. Like many of our colleagues sitting in this chamber today, his experience serving the constituents of his home province is invaluable to the work we do on behalf of Canadians.

Norm, I am thrilled, and I know I speak for my colleagues, to welcome you to the Red Chamber. I know I speak for everyone when I say to you, "Welcome back to Ottawa!"

Our other Senate colleague from the province of Quebec has an eclectic background that includes a stint in the insurance brokerage industry, a member of the National Assembly of Québec, as well as a strategic consultant working in various organizations. Ghislain Maltais has an intimate knowledge of the province of Quebec and his fellow Quebecers. His experience as a Liberal MNA, a federal Liberal candidate and most recently as a political organizer for the Conservative Party of Canada gives him a unique perspective that many of us do not have.

• (1440)

Senator, I certainly look forward to the expertise you can lend to us here in the Senate working with the opposition who happen to be sharing the same side of the aisle.

All kidding aside, Senator Maltais, you are a most welcome addition to our Conservative Senate team.

Canada's most recently appointed senator from Ontario had an interesting situation arise when she received the call from the Prime Minister's Office to let her know that she was being

considered by the Prime Minister to be appointed to the upper chamber. Dr. Asha Seth was in a taxi in Montreal with colleagues when she received the call from the Appointments Directorate. Always the embodiment of professionalism, Senator Seth was able to discreetly answer all basic questions, requesting that she return the call in the evening in order to have a little more privacy. This is a story that Senator Seth will remember in the years to come as she serves the people of our country in the Senate of Canada. Her experience as a distinguished pioneer, patient advocate and philanthropist in the health care field will be incredibly beneficial in her new role here in the Senate of Canada, not only to those of us in the Senate but also to Parliament as a whole.

While her Toronto-based family practice patients will undoubtedly miss her expertise and kind care, Senator Seth's distinguished medical and philanthropic background will be an important asset as she embarks on her new role as a senator in the Parliament of Canada.

Welcome, Asha.

Honourable senators, it is no secret that our government is advocating for essential democratic reform, including the election of senators to Canada's upper chamber of sober second thought. Betty Unger is a strong proponent of Senate reform and has spent the better part of the last 14 years working toward that paramount change to our democratic institutions. During her first Senate election in 1996, Betty's then six-month-old grandson Alexander wore a T-shirt that said "Grandma for Senator."

Little did they know that 16 years later, after much hard work and dedication to Senate reform and another Senate election victory in 2004, Alexander can now legitimately call Betty "Senator Grandma."

Senator Unger brings a considerable background in the health care field as she joins us in her new role as a senator. She worked as a registered nurse for several years before starting her own nursing services company, which she successfully managed for 25 years. Her company, Medico Mobile Ltd., started in Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer but eventually expanded across the province of Alberta, providing medical testing to national life insurance companies and occupational health services to industry.

We are pleased to welcome Betty, Canada's third elected senator and first female elected senator to the Senate of Canada.

Welcome, Betty.

Honourable senators, please join me in welcoming this dynamic group of new parliamentarians. Their varied experience, interests and strengths will be of considerable benefit to our unique and important role in Parliament.

To our new colleagues, I encourage each of you to embrace the opportunity that has been bestowed upon you by our Prime Minister and Governor General. Canadians have many diverse interests, some geographical, socio-economical and, of course, political. We have all been appointed to serve these interests in the upper chamber of Canada's Parliament.

In our distinctive role as senators, we have an opportunity to be a part of a much-needed change to our parliamentary system. You have all supported our Prime Minister's vision for Senate reform, and I look forward to the many strides we will take together in the months and years ahead to see this vision come to fruition.

Thank you very much, colleagues.

[Translation]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE SENATE

Hon. Ghislain Maltais: Honourable senators, my first statement in this chamber will of course be to thank the Right Honourable Prime Minister for appointing me and to greet my colleagues who have been sworn in today.

The work of a senator is essential: to represent people who do not have a voice. Senators speak for those who are without a voice. The life experience I bring with me — 40 years of public service — will no doubt be useful. I will put it to good use for all Canadians and for my colleagues, so that it may reflect how lucky we are to live in this big, beautiful country, Canada.

Honourable senators, I thank you.

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY

MODEL PARLIAMENT

Hon. Marie-P. Poulin: Honourable senators, in January 1993, 22 students from Laurentian University in Sudbury met in the city council chambers to start up a parliamentary project. Their goal was to discuss the political issues of the day and to learn about the Canadian parliamentary system. Laurentian University's model parliament program was born.

This model parliament has continued to evolve over the years and has attracted more and more students. In 1998, students organized the sixth model parliament in the House of Commons, here in Ottawa. Laurentian students have returned to Ottawa every year since.

On January 6, 2012, more than 150 participants gathered on Parliament Hill for the 20th edition of this remarkable event. A new component was added this year to complete the model parliament, with students and alumni in both the House of Commons and here in the Senate.

I had the opportunity to participate in this event as the "virtual Speaker of the Senate". With both chambers in operation, the students had the opportunity to discover how a complete

parliament works. There was an official opening, a speech from the throne by Laurentian University Chancellor Aline Chrétien, who served as "virtual Governor General", tabling of a budget, introduction of six bills and finally, Royal Assent.

According to Laurentian University President Dominic Giroux, who participated in the model parliament as Sergeant-at-Arms in the other place:

The model parliament program is an interactive way to engage students and a unique opportunity for them to discover what democracy is about while putting into practice some of the knowledge that they have acquired.

Honourable senators, I am proud that the Senate opened its doors and participated in this activity so that students can experience in this unique way the Senate's important role in our parliamentary system. I would like to thank our Speaker, Noël Kinsella, and the Senate's administrative team, including the committee clerk, Daniel Charbonneau. Daniel made all of the arrangements. I would also like to congratulate the organizers, the students and the alumni.

I would especially like to congratulate Zachary Courtemanche, president of the Laurentian University Political Science Association, alumnus Nathan Chevrier and professor Rand Dyck. Their efforts made Laurentian University's model parliament a great success.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, it is an honour to rise today to draw your attention to Black History Month, which begins tomorrow. February is the perfect time for Canadians to recognize the important contribution that Black people have made to Canada's history.

[English]

February is Black History Month. This month-long event allows us to look back into the history of African-Canadians and their countless contributions to our society. It also sheds some light on some of the challenges Black Canadians are facing in today's society.

• (1450)

In fact, a recent study conducted by DESTA, Dare Every Soul to Achieve, recently examined the "challenges and difficulties facing Black youth in Montreal and the strategies they use to cope with them."

DESTA is a not-for-profit, community-based organization serving marginalized youth, aged 18 to 25, primarily from the English-speaking Black community in the greater Montreal area.

The DESTA research study entitled *Race, Risk and Resilience: Implications for Community Based Practices in the Black Community in Montreal* surveyed more than 100 youth from the Montreal area. The report published in November 2011 shows us that Black anglophone youth living in predominantly French-speaking Montreal face particular challenges and stressors.

[Senator LeBreton]

More specifically, unilingual anglophones and those whose French language skills are poor or limited are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, in addition to facing barriers to employment. In fact, 50 per cent of the youth surveyed in the study said that their French skills were mediocre or weak.

With this study, DESTA wanted to establish what challenges or stressors are affecting Black youth and find prevention and intervention strategies.

Honourable senators, we have known for years that Black youth in the province of Quebec are struggling when it comes to education. The 2006 census shows us that 38 per cent of Black youth have not completed high school, compared to only 12 per cent of the general population.

The unemployment rate for Black university graduates is 10 per cent — more than double the rate for non-Blacks.

Honourable senators, the results of the DESTA research study show us that many Black youth in Montreal encounter racism and discrimination and are bombarded by negative images of youth like them. We need to come together as a society to remind these youth that success is attainable, that it is not impossible provided you put your mind to it.

The one big wish I have, honourable senators, is that by celebrating Black History Month we can empower Black youth across Canada and give them the tools they need to overcome some of the social and economic challenges they face on a daily basis.

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, for over 50 years the men and women of the Canadian Coast Guard have been providing exceptional service and contributing to the safety, accessibility and security of our Canadian waters.

On January 26, 1962, then Minister of Transport Leon Balcer announced in the other place that the Department of Transport fleet would now be called the Canadian Coast Guard.

Some years later, in 1995, the Coast Guard fleet and DFO patrol craft and research vessels came together as one fleet. In 2005 the Coast Guard became a special operating agency within Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The most well-known service provided by the Coast Guard is search and rescue operations. In the Maritime region the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Halifax coordinates all search and rescue operations associated with aircraft and marine emergencies in Eastern Canada. In an average year the centre responds to 1,400 maritime search and rescue cases. On average, 410 lives are saved each year in distress situations. The value of a strong and professional Coast Guard is apparent.

The Canadian Coast Guard also has a mandate to deliver a variety of other services to Canadians, including ice breaking, placing and maintaining navigational buoys, environmental protection, and providing marine communications and vessel traffic services.

As senators will know, Canada has the longest coastline in the world, stretching approximately 244,000 kilometres from coast to coast to coast. That makes the Coast Guard's tasks incredibly challenging.

Honourable senators, more than 4,500 hard-working men and women across Canada provide professional and dedicated service to the Canadian Coast Guard. Please join with me in congratulating the Canadian Coast Guard on 50 years of exceptional service and wishing them all the best for continued service in the future.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

STUDY ON ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

SIXTH REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TABLED WITH CLERK DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that pursuant to the order of reference adopted on June 21, 2011, and to the order adopted by the Senate on December 15, 2011, the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology deposited with the Clerk of the Senate, on December 22, 2011, its sixth report entitled *Opening the Door: Reducing Barriers to Post-Secondary Education in Canada*.

I move that the report be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Ogilvie, report placed on Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[Translation]

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY THE PROCEEDS OF CRIME (MONEY LAUNDERING) AND TERRORIST FINANCING ACT

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate, I move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce be authorized to undertake a review of the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act* (S.C. 2000, c. 17), pursuant to section 72 of the said Act; and

That the committee submit its final report no later than May 31, 2012.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

[English]

PATENT ACT FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer presented Bill S-208, An Act to amend the Patent Act and the Food and Drugs Act (drugs for international humanitarian purposes).

(Bill read first time.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

(On motion of Senator Jaffer, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY

Hon. Nancy Greene Raine: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the *Maple Products Regulations*, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;

(c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;

(d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets, and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;

(e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;

(f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and

(g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products.

• (1500)

[Translation]

ORDERS OF REFERENCE OF SENATE COMMITTEES

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the content of committee orders of reference.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OLD AGE SECURITY PENSION

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question, of course, is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Madam Leader, Canadians are rightly worried about their pensions, and these fears were exacerbated last week when the Prime Minister announced in Davos, Switzerland, that he would be bringing about major changes to our public pension system. That statement caught Canadians by surprise, particularly so since the Prime Minister had made it clear during the recent election campaign that he would not be touching transfers to individuals or seniors.

Therefore, we have two conflicting positions: the election position and the Davos position. If this were not enough, two ministers have since offered contradictory positions to reporters at home.

Transforming the public pension system is not a game, as the leader would well know as a former Minister of State for Seniors. This is not something to be taken lightly, since 4.2 million Canadian seniors receive Old Age Security and often depend on that pension income to make ends meet. They need to know whether they have enough money to get by. What hard-working Canadians and seniors need now, more than ever, is clarity. They need the assurance that they will receive the benefits they have been expecting for decades.

Madam Leader, what is your government's plan to overhaul the public pension system? Which is it: the election answer or the Davos answer? Canadians need to know and they need to know now.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I am happy to respond to the question of Senator Cowan. I must say to him that anyone who was watching and listening to the Prime Minister's speech in Davos —

Senator Mitchell: How could they?

Senator LeBreton: There is such a thing as television.

Senator Mitchell: Not in here.

Senator LeBreton: You were not in here, Senator Mitchell.

The fact of the matter is that the Prime Minister talked about the ongoing plans of the government in a host of areas. With regard to pensions, he made it clear in that speech — and we have made it clear before and after — that people who are retired persons or senior citizens and who are receiving old age security benefits at the present time will in no way be affected by long-range plans down the road to ensure this system is sustainable. Furthermore, he also said this would not affect Canadians who are about to retire.

I must tell Senator Cowan that I am disappointed by the statements of some in the opposition and in the mainstream media. I think they have done a great disservice to our fellow senior citizens in alarming them unduly about something that will never happen.

Honourable senators, our government is committed. In the campaign, we made it clear that when we embarked on a deficit reduction plan, it would not affect transfers to provinces or individuals. That was true during the election campaign and that is true now. Our government is committed to ensuring that retirement security is there for all Canadians.

Having said that, as the Prime Minister said in Davos, we will take a balanced, responsible approach and prudent action to ensure that the Old Age Security system that has served us so well is strong and sustainable in the mid and long term for people who should be able, as we have, to look forward to a stable Old Age Security system.

Senator Cowan: The leader expresses her disappointment with the concerns that have been raised by others. I remind her that it was not someone on this side of the house, in this house or in the other place, who began this firestorm. It was her Prime Minister, and he chose to do that at an international economic forum in Davos. The Prime Minister should come here. If he proposes to make changes that affect the public pension system in this country, he should talk about them in this country and not at some private club in Davos, Switzerland.

I suggest to the leader that the concerns that are now rampant in Canada are not as a result of any fear mongering on the part of anyone else here; they are a direct result of the speculation of the comments of her leader, her Prime Minister, Mr. Harper.

Senator LeBreton: I cannot answer for the official opposition or the third party in the other place about speculation, because that is exactly what they did. The Prime Minister and the government have made it very clear that the existing Old Age Security benefits that our seniors receive are not and will not be touched, and he also mentioned people who were about to retire.

I wish to remind the honourable senator that this government has made more changes to the benefit of our senior citizens than any government in history, including pension income splitting, and removing millions of seniors off tax rolls. Furthermore, we increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement an extra \$600 for single seniors and over \$800 for married seniors. This was the highest increase in 25 years. Guess what, Senator Cowan? Your members in the other place voted against that.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, I think the question then becomes: Where is the line drawn? If this will not affect current pensioners or people who are about to become pensioners, who will it affect? Remember that many Canadians, with the economic meltdown in the recession, have seen much of their pension retirement investments battered. These Canadians are counting on Old Age Security and maybe even the Guaranteed Income Supplement to help them out when they retire.

Many would agree that Canada will go through changes when the baby boomers retire over these next few years and decades. However, the experts disagree with the government's assessment. In a recent report, the Prime Minister's own Chief Actuary said that although Old Age Security costs will increase over the next 18 years, so too will Canada's GDP. Did we forget that the economy will also increase? It will cost 2.4 per cent of the GDP this year, the Chief Actuary says, but it will only rise to 3.1 per cent in 2030. He estimates that this will be the peak. Costs will slowly decrease after we have reached the peak of the baby boomers retiring.

Research was prepared by Edward Whitehouse at the government's request. He worked for the government as well as the OECD. He said: "The analysis suggests that Canada does not face major challenges of financial sustainability with its public pension schemes," and he went on to say, "There is no pressing financial or fiscal need to increase pension ages in the foreseeable future." Why is it threatening people who are trying to save up for their retirement? Where is the evidence that you need to do this?

• (1510)

Senator LeBreton: First of all, the government is not scaring Canadians. I have made it clear, and the government has made it clear. Even when we ran in the election campaign, we made it very clear that we were not going to reduce the deficit on the backs of provinces or individuals, something that was done by the previous government that severely hampered the provinces and severely damaged our health care system.

Just to make things very clear, honourable senators, we have a clear commitment that we are going to eliminate the deficit without cutting transfers to either individuals or provinces. However, events around the world — and we only have to look at what is happening in Europe and particularly Greece — make it clear that governments have to make responsible decisions to ensure that the social programs that we enjoy now are sustainable into the future. That is our goal. We are working to protect Canadians' financial security.

The honourable senator mentioned some actuaries. There is actuarial evidence that the number of Canadians who support our senior citizens is shrinking. That is why, when the Prime Minister was in Davos, he also talked about the need to change our immigration system so that we bring skilled workers into this country.

We are looking at the big picture. We want to ensure that Canada is put on a sustainable footing so that, in the future, people who come to this country, work in this country and retire in this country, have social programs that are on a long-term, sustainable footing so that they can continue to enjoy the benefits that Canadians presently enjoy.

I repeat, honourable senators — and Senator Eggleton knows this and people know this — that this does not in any way affect our senior citizens or people who are about to retire. The government has simply indicated honestly that, in the long term, there are many things that we have to look at in this country. We have to look at our immigration system. We have to look at our resources. We have to look at the sustainability of our pension systems. We have already mentioned that the Canada Pension Plan is on sound financial footing.

Interestingly enough, the honourable senator's side in the other place and some in the media have been demanding that the government start looking down the road for long-term sustainability, yet, when the Prime Minister speaks about some of the things the government is looking at, they all run around with their hair on fire as if we are cutting off people's pensions. Honourable senators know that is not the case.

Senator Eggleton: All we are trying to find out is what is going on here. The Prime Minister went over to Davos. I don't know about Greece. Who brought Greece into this? What have they got to do with it? He made some vague general comments in terms of our own fiscal situation. He keeps going around the world saying what sound fiscal stability we have in Canada, thanks, I might add, to previous Liberal governments. He made this statement and then here we are in limbo suddenly trying to

finding out what this is all about. The speculation is that it will come out in the budget. Well, that is another month or so away. We have this thing left in limbo and people are wondering what it really means for them.

Let me pick up on one other thing the leader said. She said that the government does not want to do this on the backs of seniors and she mentioned things done by her government to help seniors. I hope we are also not going to do this on the backs of the poor, because 6 per cent of Canadian seniors still live in poverty. Most of the pension plans over the years have helped a lot of seniors, but we still have 6 per cent living in poverty.

Almost 40 per cent of the total OAS payments go to seniors making less than \$20,000 a year. This includes a disproportionate number of older, single women. OAS and GIS were designed to help provide the necessities of life for lower income seniors. Many low-income, low-skilled jobs are physically demanding and difficult to perform beyond the age of 65. Automatically going from 65 to 67 will not work for everybody.

As well, those who live at or below the poverty line generally have lower life expectancies than those who are wealthy, so raising the age eligibility is a real physical and psychological burden to many people. According to the Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement play a significant role in keeping tens of thousands of seniors out of poverty.

Will the government be sure to protect the most vulnerable of our society and not bring these measures on the backs of the poor?

Senator LeBreton: I have to take issue with the honourable senator's comment on the financial health of this country. The financial health of this country is directly related to the free trade agreement signed by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney and to the revenues brought in by his government on tax reform. The Liberals, by the way, created such chaos in this place trying to stop that and then, of course, claimed credit for it.

The fact is that our government is reviewing measures to protect Canadian pensions in the long term. We will implement any changes fairly, allowing lots of time and lots of notice to adjust. Of course, as I pointed out previously, the people currently receiving Old Age Security are not affected. It is doing a great disservice to our fellow citizens to alarm them and make them believe that this is the case.

The honourable senator mentioned low-income seniors. Of course, as was pointed out by his leader, I was the Minister of State for Seniors for three years, and I will again put on the record what this government has done for seniors.

In Budget 2011, we enhanced the Guaranteed Income Supplement with a top-up of \$600 for low-income seniors and \$840 for low-income senior couples, improving financial security for over 700,000 seniors in 2012. As I mentioned previously, this was the largest increase in the GIS in 25 years.

The budget extends the targeted initiatives for older workers to support training and employment programs because there are many seniors who want to stay in the workforce. We recognize that. Over 10,000 seniors have been helped by this program since 2007.

The budget also increased funding — and I was very happy I was the Minister of State for Seniors when we did this — for the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

These measures build on the results we have achieved since 2006. Six days from now will be the sixth anniversary of our government being sworn in. For example, we have twice increased the age credit, providing a tax savings to 2.2 million seniors. Pension income-splitting was introduced in 2007. We increased the age limit for RRSPs from 69 to 71, and 85,000 seniors have been removed from the tax rolls completely.

We raised the GIS income exemption from \$500, which it was under the honourable senator's government, to \$3,500, thereby allowing people who wanted to work to earn a little extra money without being penalized on their pension.

We introduced automatic renewal of the GIS so that eligible seniors who file a tax return no longer have to reapply each year, which was the case under the previous government. Last year, 96 percent of seniors had their GIS automatically renewed.

We launched an awareness campaign on the very serious issue of elder abuse. We are working on literacy programs for seniors. I again point out to the honourable senator that all of these wonderful measures on behalf of seniors were voted against by his party in the other place.

Senator Eggleton: All of that is very nice, but the honourable leader is avoiding the question. People want to know, now that the Prime Minister made this statement in Davos, what the specifics of it are. Put people at ease and tell them if there is nothing to fear; give them the details. What will the government do and when will the government announce what it will do?

• (1520)

Senator LeBreton: The Prime Minister's speech in Davos laid out in broad terms the directions that the government wants to take over the next few years. He mentioned many areas, which I have mentioned, that will position Canada to have long-term, sustainable programs so that it does not fall into the dreadful economic situation currently faced by some countries in Europe, in particular Greece.

Honourable senators, the government is reviewing measures to protect Canadians' pensions. No changes will be implemented without allowing lots of time and notice to make adjustments to these changes. In his Davos speech, the Prime Minister, like any forward-thinking leader in the world today, laid out a framework that the government intends to follow over the months and years ahead.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION SECRETARIAT

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Six years ago, this government brought in the Accountability Act, which provided for a public appointments commission. In 2006, an announcement was made about the commission but it was never set up. A public appointments commission secretariat was put in place to back the commission, which still does not exist. However, the secretariat still exists and has spent over \$3 million to date and has a budget of \$1.1 million this year.

Since there is neither a commission nor a commissioner, who directs the work of the public appointments commission secretariat? To whom does it report?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I am glad to see that Senator Callbeck has Greg Weston doing her research. The honourable senator is right: The government made a commitment to this position. Early on when this government was in a minority, it advanced a name for commissioner that was rejected by a committee in the other place. The appointments secretariat in the Privy Council Office and in the Prime Minister's Office was handling the appointments of well qualified Canadian individuals from various agencies and commissions. The secretariat is basically made up of public servants in the Privy Council Office.

Senator Callbeck: The Prime Minister advanced a name for commissioner before the Accountability Act was passed. To my knowledge, the government has not advanced another name since; and that was roughly six years ago. We do not have a public appointments commission and we do not have a commissioner, but we have a secretariat that is spending millions of taxpayers' dollars that could be spent on worthwhile programs such as seniors' pensions.

Is the government planning to announce the name of a commissioner? If so, can we expect it to happen this year?

Senator LeBreton: As the honourable senator knows, the government advanced the name of a gentleman who would perform the position for \$1 per year, but his nomination was voted down in the other place. Information on any movement on this commission or who may head it is not available to me. If there is any such information on an appointment, it will be forthcoming at the appropriate time.

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

BUDGET

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

At the end of the 2010-11 fiscal year, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces apparently returned to the government somewhere around \$2 billion of unspent budgetary allocations.

I realize that the Department of National Defence is the most discretionary source of funding that exists in the entire government. Can you explain to me why it was not possible for this department to spend the absolutely incredible amount of \$2 billion, in accordance with its planned and approved budget for this fiscal year?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): It is no secret that this happens in any government department at the end of the fiscal year when resources are unused. It is standard practice in government operations no matter who the political leadership is.

As the honourable senator knows, the government is in the process of deficit reduction and is looking for savings across all government departments, and the Department of National Defence is no different from any other department in this process.

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: I have a supplementary question. My question did not pertain to the 5 per cent budget cuts that the government asked all of its departments to make in the 2010-11 fiscal year, which were supposed to come into effect in the coming fiscal year. We also did not see where these cuts were going to be made, since this information was not published.

At first, the government was not asking for budget cuts and a budget was planned for the work. Approximately 10 per cent of the budget was not used.

In previous years, departments were allowed to carry up to 2.5 per cent of their budgets forward from one fiscal year to the next. It was done. It was done again this year. In addition, near the end of the third quarter, departments were allowed to transfer unspent vote 5 funds to vote 1. This represented an amount of between \$400 million and \$500 million a year, which was used to meet end-of-year needs. After both these fiscal operations, National Defence was within its budget.

However, last year, the 2.5 per cent was transferred, but the unspent vote 5 funds were not transferred to vote 1, so the \$450 million in question was not transferred or used, for the first time ever. On top of that, almost another billion dollars was not spent.

My question is this: can the honourable senator tell us how such a large department with a headquarters that employs over 8,000 people could mismanage its budget to such an extent that it would return so much money at the end of the year?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: The honourable senator is being unfair to his former colleagues at National Defence when he says that the department has mismanaged its budget. It is clear and well understood by all Canadians that since taking office this government has made significant investments in the Canadian Forces. In fact, the defence budget has grown by an average of \$1 billion per year since 2006. Over the last couple of months, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces,

like all other areas of government, have looked at their resources and have identified numerous efficiencies that do not affect the core capabilities of our military.

• (1530)

The department is to be applauded for doing its part in the overall government's efforts to ensure best value for Canadian taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: I cannot believe you answered that way, saying that a government department can disregard the notion of sound management and that it is fulfilling its obligations by handing out money, when a certain amount had been budgeted and nearly 10 per cent of that budget was not spent.

Is it possible that this department no longer has the capacity to spend this money since the passing of the Accountability Act, which has made it nearly impossible to carry out and approve any projects because the process is so onerous and complicated?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: That is a ridiculous statement. As the recent awarding of the shipbuilding contracts clearly underlines, the fact is that the procurement system and the operation of our forces have been exemplary.

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Moore on December 7, 2011, concerning payment of death benefits.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Nancy Ruth on December 13, 2011, concerning the themes and graphic designs on the new polymer bank notes.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Nancy Ruth on October 25, 2011, concerning the rights of girls and women in Libya.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Lovelace Nicholas on December 6, 2011, concerning services in Attawapiskat First Nation.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Poulin on November 29, 2011, concerning services in the Attawapiskat First Nation.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Brazeau on November 30, 2011, concerning services in Attawapiskat First Nation.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Calbeck on November 24, 2011, concerning pharmaceutical drug trials.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Zimmer on November 2, 2011, concerning the water supply on reserves.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Munson on October 20, 2011, concerning suicide prevention.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Meighen on October 19, 2011, concerning Canadian Forces recruitment.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Tardif on October 18, 2011, concerning the promotion of linguistic duality.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Calbeck on October 4, 2011, concerning the Veterans Independence Program.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Hervieux-Payette on September 29, 2011, concerning the support for Wapikoni Mobile.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to an oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Calbeck on June 22, 2011, concerning youth employment programs.

[English]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

PAYMENT OF DEATH BENEFITS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Wilfred P. Moore on December 7, 2011)

The Death Benefit is paid in the event of a sudden service-related death. It is paid to the surviving spouse or common-law partner and to any dependent children, based on the

rationale that they are the people who would most likely have accompanied the Canadian Forces member into military life and therefore need assistance re-establishing into civilian life. Although other family members, such as parents, also suffer from the loss due to the sudden death of the Canadian Forces member, they would not have the same re-establishment need.

The Death Benefit is one of the integrated suite of benefits established under the *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act* (New Veterans Charter). It is a tax-free, lump sum payment and the maximum benefit payable for 2011 is \$285,319.47. The rationale used in establishing the Death Benefit is in keeping with the overarching policy rationale for the New Veterans Charter; that is to assist with re-establishment and re-integration into civilian life from the military.

Other death-related benefits, however, would be available to family members such as the Department of National Defence's contributory pension-related benefits or life insurance which, in certain circumstances, may be paid to the Canadian Forces member's designated beneficiary or estate.

The Death Benefit, under the New Veterans Charter, is designed for a different purpose from that of the death benefit in the contributory pension plans. It is not a contribution-based benefit but instead is designed to address the unique needs of immediate family members (a surviving spouse/common-law partner and dependent children), in recognition of the need for the surviving spouse or common-law partner to re-establish into civilian life following the sudden death, which may involve relocating away from a military base with their dependent children and possibly re-entering the job market.

[Translation]

FINANCE

CURRENCY THEMES AND DESIGNS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Nancy Ruth on December 13, 2011)

In 2011, the Bank began issuing a new, more secure and cost effective series of bank notes, the first in Canada printed on polymer material. Since 1935, each time the Bank of Canada issues a new series of bank notes, the previous theme and designs are retired and replaced with new ones.

For instance, the 1986 Birds of Canada series \$50 note featured a Snowy Owl. Prior to that, the 1969-1979 "multi-coloured" series featured the RCMP Musical Ride.

The theme of the new series is Frontiers, and each denomination will feature a different image on the reverse of the note, as announced in June 2011.

This new bank note series celebrates Canada's achievements at the frontiers of innovation. The new \$50 note, which is currently in production and will be issued in March 2012, features images of the Canadian Coast Guard Ship (CCG) Amundsen in the North, reflecting Canada's leading role in Arctic research and honouring the men and women who serve in the Canadian Coast Guard, on its 50th anniversary year (see http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/eng/CCG/50th_Anniversary/50_dollar_bill). The note's design also evokes the part that Canada's northern frontier — with its vastness and splendour — has played in shaping our cultural identity.

Bank notes are cultural touchstones that reflect and celebrate our Canadian experience. As is customary, the Bank consulted Canadians as it explored design concepts for the new series. Numerous ideas were refined to a specific theme and image concepts that took into consideration past note designs and technical specifications. Canadians were also asked to provide feedback as the bank note designs were finalised.

The key criteria used by the Bank of Canada to establish imagery for the new series of bank notes were that they:

- convey pride and confidence in Canada;
- are distinctly Canadian;
- are modern and forward looking;
- promote Canadian values; and
- not easily become outdated.

The remaining denominations will feature:

- \$20 The Canadian National Vimy Memorial — evokes the contributions and sacrifices of Canadian men and women in conflicts throughout our history.
- \$10 The *Canadian* train — represents Canada's great technical feat of linking its eastern and western frontiers by what was, at the time, the longest railway ever built.
- \$5 *Canadarm2* and *Dextre* — symbolize Canada's continuing contribution to the international space program through robotics innovation.

The Bank has informed and thanked the organizations representing the images on the previous Canadian Journey series, including the Famous Five Foundation, for the support provided to our design and communication teams during preparations for, and the issue of, the Canadian Journey series. These images will remain cherished parts of Canada's numismatic heritage.

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

LIBYA

(Response to question raised by Hon. Nancy Ruth on October 25, 2011)

The end of the Gadhafi regime turns the page on over forty years of tyranny and oppression in Libya. Canada can be proud to have stood behind the Libyan people from the outset of the conflict. Canada has re-opened its embassy in Tripoli and will continue to support Libya as it moves down the path of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law for all Libyans. Canada has expressed to the Libyan authorities our expectations that the country's new foundation will be built on the respect of human rights for all Libyans, including women and girls.

During his visit to Tripoli in October, Minister Baird led a roundtable with NGO's, including the Canadian NGO "Rights and Democracy", on the important role women should play in the new Libya. Women played a crucial role during the crisis and must be an integral and active part of Libya's new emerging civil society.

The situation in Libya remains fluid in the transitional period leading to the establishment of a new elected government. On November 1, Libya's Transitional Council elected a new Prime Minister, Mr. Abdul Raheem al-Keeb. Canada is encouraged by his commitment to make human rights a priority. He has correctly recognized that the emergence of democracy and social equality in Libya will not happen without the realization of women's rights.

On November 13, Canadian officials attended a first national conference on women's rights, "One Voice". This was the first such event to be held in the post-Gadhafi era. During this conference, women participants expressed their hope to be represented in the new government. We understand that top leaders of the National Transitional Council (NTC) participated in the conference and committed to take action towards the establishment of quotas for female representation in Parliament and to pursue the removal of citizenship laws that discriminate against Libyan women married to non-Libyans. This was well-received by participants in the conference, although progress on these commitments will need to be closely monitored.

The Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force of the Department of Foreign Affairs (START) is currently in discussions with actors on the ground to develop programming options in order to address women's rights. Canada will continue to monitor the situation closely.

During the active phase of violent conflict in Libya, Canada was very disturbed by accounts of sexual violence. Canada has always been a strong advocate for international efforts to combat sexual violence in situations of conflict. We consistently underline the importance of accountability

in cases of sexual violence, particularly in conflict situations where sexual violence is used as a weapon of war. We urge states, including Libya, to uphold their responsibility to investigate and prosecute these crimes to bring justice to victims and to deter future crimes.

We continue to support investigations into allegations in this area with respect to the Libyan conflict so that any identified perpetrators will be brought to justice. In this regard, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) has provided funding for an expert on sexual gender-based violence to work with the Commission of Inquiry on Libya. We also recognize how important it is to ensure support for the survivors of crimes of sexual violence and to assist their reintegration into their communities.

Canada provided a grant of \$250,000 to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to protect and assist up to 50,000 women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual assaults, and to provide critical care to victims of GBV in Libya.

Canada supports the International Commission of Inquiry on Libya (COI) and the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to hold accountable those who are responsible for human rights violations and who committed crimes during the conflict. We also continue to raise the protection and promotion of women's human rights in Libya in multilateral fora.

Canada is also clear in our ambitions. The reconciliation and reconstruction of Libya is a project that must be led and undertaken by the Libyan people. As clearly expressed by Minister Baird, the UN, international, and regional partners, including Canada, will be there to provide help and support, including to assist the Libyan government in respecting its commitment and obligations in relation to women's rights.

Below are excerpts from a speech and press release referring to women in Libya:

http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/SecurityCouncilMonitor/Debates/WPS/WPS2011/can_wps_oct2011.pdf

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, 28th of October 2011, Security Council Chamber

No. 293 - October 11, 2011 - 8:15 a.m. ET - Minister Baird Concludes Successful Visit to Tripoli

Canadian assistance will help secure weapons, improve women's rights, strengthen democracy and increase trade

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird today visited Tripoli to assess the situation there and to announce the latest phase of Canada's support for Libya's transition to the post-Qadhafi era.

"Our government remains committed to protecting the Libyan people and supporting their efforts to build a brighter future for themselves," said Baird. "Obviously,

there are a number of pressing needs and our support will help ensure those needs are met."

In Tripoli, the Minister met with Mustafa Abdul Jalil, Chair of the National Transitional Council, to discuss the progress of Libya's transition. He announced that Canada would be contributing \$10 million to help secure weapons of mass destruction and remove and dispose of explosive remnants of war.

"The security situation in Libya is still quite volatile and the risk of these items falling into the wrong hands or injuring civilians is very real. Canada sees this disarmament as a top priority in making Libya and the entire region safer," said Baird.

Baird also hosted a round table with Libyan women's rights advocates to discuss the important role that women must play in the new Libya and its democratic institutions.

"The Libyan people have chosen for themselves a future in which there is respect for freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and Canada will continue to support that vision," said Baird. "We continue to encourage the new government of Libya to ensure the role of women in Libya's transition."

Representatives from non-governmental organizations and Canadian businesses in the infrastructure, technology and natural resources sectors joined the Minister on this trip.

Visit [Canada's Response to the Situation in Libya](http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communiques/2011/293.aspx?lang=eng&view=d) for a full picture of Canada's commitment.

<http://www.international.gc.ca/media/aff/news-communiques/2011/293.aspx?lang=eng&view=d>

[Translation]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Sandra Lovelace Nicholas on December 6, 2011)

Federal funding to support third party management of a First Nation is provided through the annual Band Support Funding Grants provided to First Nations from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

[English]

SERVICES IN ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Marie-P. Poulin on November 29, 2011)

Our Government continues to work with the Attawapiskat First Nation and has taken action to improve conditions for the community.

Significant government funding has been provided to Attawapiskat First Nation to support programs and infrastructure development over the past six years. Since 2006, \$4.3 million has been allocated to the First Nation for housing, and more than \$90 million dollars in total funding during the same period. A comprehensive audit is being undertaken to identify how this money has been spent and what oversight measures have been taken over the past five years.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada immediately committed \$499,500 in funding to Attawapiskat First Nation toward the renovation of existing homes to meet the community's immediate needs as identified by Chief Spence in early November 2011.

Departmental officials maintained ongoing contact with the community's leadership and worked to help them implement their existing emergency plan and assisted the community in ensuring the safety and security of residents.

On December 11, 2011, Minister Duncan announced that 22 modular homes had been purchased for families in Attawapiskat First Nation, to be delivered when the winter ice road opened. To address immediate short-term shelter needs, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada approved funding to renovate the Jules Mattinas Healing Lodge and the ATCO (Debeers) Trailer Complex in the community. This investment implemented improvements to the water/wastewater, electrical, and mechanical systems in these facilities, and provided warm dry shelter to community members in need.

This Government appointed a Third Party Manager on December 5, 2011 to help assure residents' immediate health and safety needs, and to help the community operate effectively through the winter. The Third Party Manager continues to ensure that departmental investments in the community are made in a transparent manner and bring concrete results.

The Government will continue to work with the community to assess future housing needs with a focus on ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the residents.

The Minister assures the Senate that we have, and continue to move forward in partnership with the community, to ensure a better quality of life for the people of Attawapiskat First Nation.

[Translation]

(Response to question raised by Hon. Patrick Brazeau on November 30, 2011)

Attawapiskat First Nation has made its audited financial statements public for each fiscal year from 2005 through to 2011 on its website: www.attawapiskat.org/financial-statements.

[Senator Carignan]

[English]

HEALTH

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT— PHARMACEUTICAL DRUG TRIALS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck on November 24, 2011)

Health Canada accepted the Auditor General's (AG) recommendations and work is well underway to implement these recommendations.

In considering this issue, it is worth noting that this audit covered the two years prior to the implementation of the updated fees.

A key step in responding to the AG's concerns was to update industry user fees, which were many years out of date. These updates were required to provide stable funding for the delivery of important regulatory services for Canadians and the industry. The new fees, which came into effect on April 1, 2011, have been key Health Canada's response to the AG's findings.

For example, as noted in the 2010-11 Departmental Performance Report (DPR), 73 — 80% of Health Canada's drug reviews, depending on the submission category, met the departments own standards and timelines for brand name pharmaceuticals. For biologics and radiopharmaceuticals, 57-80% of Health Canada's reviews met its performance targets.

More recently in 2011-2012, after the implementation of updated fees, performance has improved to over 90% for brand name pharmaceuticals and 100% for biologics and radiopharmaceuticals.

For over-the-counter drugs, the average review times have decreased from 539 days in 2009-10 to 349 days, an improvement of 190 days. In the area of generic drugs, over the last several years the number of applications has tripled. This 300% increase in the volume of submissions placed a serious burden on the available resources in the Health Canada department, and resulted in unmet performance targets. Since then, the Department has and continues to take steps to eliminate the backlog in generics, and meet its performance standards for timelines.

With the new user fee revenues, Health Canada is taking measures to improve the timely review of drug applications by:

- Hiring and training a significant number of new scientific evaluators;
- Opening a satellite office of generic drug reviewers to capitalize on regional expertise and address the backlog;

- Leveraging external expertise when required;
- Strengthening our project management capacity and queue management, this includes performance monitoring and new methods to forecast incoming workload;
- Increasing our use of electronic tools with the goal of eliminating paper reviews thus reducing the burden on industry and our evaluators;
- Enhancing regulatory cooperation with other agencies and adapting and adopting international best practices and standards as appropriate;
- Developing more guidelines to assist drug companies in submitting better quality applications which will require less time to review.

These strategies will improve timelines and Health Canada's reporting in generic drug review and ensure continued strong and improved performance in brand name pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter drugs, and biologics and radiopharmaceuticals. These efforts demonstrate the continuing commitment of Health Canada.

[Translation]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

WATER SUPPLY ON RESERVES

(Response to question raised by Hon. Rod A. A. Zimmer on November 2, 2011)

There are 17 remote fly-in communities in northern Manitoba that are serviced by the winter road network for the shipment of supplies. These communities have a total of 3895 houses, of which 997 or 25.6 per cent are not serviced by an in-home water supply.

As recently reported in the media, approximately 800 of these homes are located in the Island Lake Tribal Council area and include the communities of Garden Hill, Red Sucker Lake, Wasagamack and St. Theresa Point First Nations.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada is working with the four Island Lake Tribal Council communities towards a long-term strategy to address the water and wastewater needs of the communities.

In the meantime, the Department is prepared to take interim action with the communities to address their highest priorities and achieve important short-term progress. The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, announced on November 17, 2011 an investment of \$5.5 million toward improving water and waste water services in the four Island Lake First Nations.

Specific priorities will be determined in collaboration with First Nation leadership and are anticipated to include the procurement of building materials for retrofitting of homes and provision of additional equipment such as water and septic trucks.

In order to expedite the anticipated winter road shipments this fiscal year, the Department is working with the Island Lake Tribal Council on a housing study and subsequent work plan to identify and prioritize the shipment of goods over the winter road network.

With the continued cooperation of the four First Nations, the Department anticipates that the retrofitting of houses in the communities can begin early in the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

For the long term, major capital projects to expand water and sewer systems are planned for each of the communities over the next five years.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada has made significant investments to improve water and wastewater systems on reserves across the country. Since 2006, more than \$2.5 billion has been invested in First Nation water and wastewater infrastructure, including more than \$55 million in the Island Lake communities.

The Government of Canada also remains committed to introducing safe drinking water legislation that will be designed to ensure that First Nations have the same health and safety protection for drinking water in their communities as do other Canadians.

[English]

HEALTH

SUICIDE PREVENTION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Jim Munson on October 20, 2011)

Suicide prevention requires action by multiple stakeholders at all levels. This action needs to be positioned within the context of other key factors including actions to address mental health promotion and the prevention of mental health problems. International evidence indicates that most effective suicide prevention efforts are integrated within broader mental health promotion / mental illness prevention initiatives. Furthermore, studies indicate that more than 90% of suicide victims suffer from a mental illness or substance abuse problem.

The federal government has a role to play in raising awareness, promoting collaboration, developing knowledge, sharing best practices, and providing services. The Government of Canada (GoC) currently invests significantly in mental health and suicide prevention. In particular, the following key areas of action are supported by the GoC:

Public awareness and education

In 2007, the Government of Canada invested \$130 million over ten years to establish and support the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC). Funding for the MHCC supports initiatives such as the *Mental Health First Aid* Program and an anti-stigma campaign entitled *Opening Minds*. These programs provide early intervention for those who have mental health problems and address the need to change inappropriate attitudes and behaviours of Canadians towards people living with mental illness, such as rejection and discrimination.

Building protective factors and intervening on key risk factors for suicide

The GoC invests in a range of initiatives to build protective factors such as healthy childhood development. It also supports programs to reduce key risk factors such as substance abuse, family violence and homelessness.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has committed \$27M to fund nine mental health promotion projects over 4 years in over 50 communities. These initiatives focus on ensuring the existence of mental health protective factors for children, youth and families to enhance health and well being across the life-span. These projects also address key risk factors such as bullying and aggressive behaviours that are associated with higher risks of poor mental health, including suicidal thoughts and behaviour.

In addition, the Government provides over \$230M for the Anti-Drug Strategy to address the problem of illicit drug use in Canada and to protect our youth and families against its harmful effects. The Government also invests \$7 million each year to fund the Family Violence Initiative to improve prevention of violence within families and to intervene early to avoid related problems, including child maltreatment and neglect.

Homeless individuals with mental illness are part of the most vulnerable, highest-risk populations. The GoC has also invested in initiatives through the mental health commission to better address homelessness among individuals with mental illness, a key risk factor in this population.

Knowledge development and research

A number of federal departments and organizations develop and disseminate information and statistics on suicide and suicide related behaviours, including Statistics Canada, Canadian Institute for Health Information, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Government of Canada has invested \$234.4 million in mental health research since 2006, and has invested \$65.2 million in 2009-2010 alone. In 2009-10,

\$6 million of this amount supported research in the area of suicide prevention. A total of \$20.4 million has been spent on suicide prevention research since 2006.

CIHR has also funded the Aboriginal Community Youth Resilience Network (ACYRN), a Community-led research to prevent youth suicide.

On January 10th 2012, the Government of Canada announced that it will invest \$300-thousand in three research teams to gather global evidence on suicide prevention and will produce this knowledge in a readily accessible format.

Promoting collaboration across sectors and jurisdictions

Developing comprehensive suicide prevention strategies requires action and coordination across all levels of government, as well as with stakeholders and communities themselves. The MHCC will continue its work to improve the mental health of Canadians through collaborating across sectors and government jurisdictions. Furthermore, such work is also undertaken by PHAC for example through the Federal Provincial Territorial Public Health Network (PHN). The PHN has already identified mental health as a priority for collaborative action.

Sharing knowledge and best practices

The Government of Canada is supporting the Mental Health Commission of Canada to develop and implement a Knowledge Exchange Centre to provide Canadians and stakeholders with critical knowledge and information on mental health and mental illness.

Serving populations within direct federal responsibility

The federal government provides mental health and suicide prevention programs and services to populations of federal responsibility.

The Government committed \$75 million in Budget 2010 to extend the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy until 2015. Under this Strategy, Health Canada will continue to fund 150 suicide prevention projects in First Nations and Inuit communities across Canada, as well as invest in critical crisis response services and knowledge development activities.

Suicide prevention is also addressed through the programs and services of several federal government departments and agencies including National Defence, Veterans Affairs Canada, Correctional Service of Canada, and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. For example, the Department of National Defence has developed and is implementing suicide awareness and mental fitness programs for the Canadian Forces.

In addition to federal investments noted above, the Mental Health Commission of Canada, funded by the GoC, will release its Mental Health Strategy for Canada in early 2012. It is expected that the Strategy will integrate suicide prevention in its proposed actions and priorities, and

provide direction upon which the mental health community, all levels of government and other stakeholders can work together to achieve better mental health, including the prevention of suicide.

While the GoC invests in a number of initiatives that are critical to suicide prevention, it is currently considering options to better coordinate and therefore strengthen federal actions in this area. In particular, the Government is carefully taking into account current evidence as well as important deliberations in the Senate and the House of Commons on this matter. Together, we will continue to work on efforts for suicide prevention in Canada.

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

RECRUITMENT LEVELS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Michael A. Meighen on October 19, 2011)

In the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) in May 2008, the Government committed to expanding the Regular Force to 70,000 and the Reserve Force to 30,000 by 2028. The CF remains on track to meet its recruitment targets as outlined in the CFDS.

The Canadian Forces have reached expansion targets ahead of schedule due to successful recruiting and low attrition. There was a surge in recruitment to grow the force to the government-mandated level, in large part to sustain the mission in Afghanistan. Given the tremendous success of recruiting to meet this requirement, the CF are currently working to maintain the strength of the Regular Force at the 68,000 level. The intake requirement for this year is set at around 4,000. This represents the number of servicemen and women who are expected to be retiring or being released from the CF. As of early November, the CF have completed approximately 41 per cent of the Reserve intake for this fiscal year with about five months still remaining.

The recruiting administrative process has been streamlined in the last few years to better facilitate the administration of recruiting Reserve candidates. Recruitment has taken advantage of the robust interest in the CF and mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that the CF are selecting the best applicants from across Canada. This can translate to longer times between application and selection in some cases. In addition, while it is possible for recruitment files to be delayed due to the specifics of an individual file, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces are not aware of any systemic issues that may result in delays.

Current CF recruitment policy remains both unchanged and in line with CFDS. As for the recruitment of Reservists, there is no separate Reserve recruiting policy. Reserve units attract applicants and CF Recruiting Centres process applicants to fill the positions identified for Reserve units.

Reservists are meant to be a predominantly part-time force with periodic full-time opportunities. From time to time, full-time Reservists are needed to fulfill roles in support of critical CFDS tasks. The CF have relied heavily on Reservists over the last few years, due in large part to the need to support operational missions, to complement the Regular Force.

The Minister of National Defence would like to take this opportunity to thank both Regular and Reserve Force members for their contribution to the Government's commitment to Afghanistan and elsewhere.

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

PROMOTING LINGUISTIC DUALITY

(Response to question raised by Hon. Claudette Tardif on October 18, 2011)

The Commissioner of Official Languages Annual Report contributes to the Government of Canada's reflection on official languages.

There are many support and guidance mechanisms in place in order to assist federal institutions in implementing Part VII of the Official Languages Act (the Act), and the Government continues to improve them. In fact, its current efforts in this area are fully in line with the intent of the Commissioner's recommendations.

As we know, the Department of Canadian Heritage (the Department) already provides significant support and guidance to some thirty institutions whose activities have the greatest impact on the development of official-language minorities and the enhancement of English and French in Canadian society. The Department, in collaboration with the Treasury Board Secretariat, is now expanding its coordination activity to all federal institutions.

The objectives of this chosen approach are to have all institutions better understand their obligations related to Part VII of the Act, identify more effectively the measures to be taken and report on them more easily. This approach will harvest the potential of each federal institution, according to its mandate, and convey a full picture of the federal action in this area.

The new approach will also ensure a more coherent implementation of the Act, through better coordination with the Treasury Board Secretariat's reporting activities in official languages.

The Department and Treasury Board Secretariat are pursuing this objective of coherence through a variety of other collaboration activities, notably in the context of the Board's current policy suite renewal.

Finally, we must keep in mind that the Treasury Board Secretariat already contributes to the implementation of Part VII of the Act in many ways. For example, the Secretariat:

- ensures that all initiatives submitted for Treasury Board approval take official languages issues fully into account; and
- reminds all federal institutions of the importance, during financial strategic reviews, of determining the impact of any potential decision on official-language minorities and the enhancement of English and French in Canadian society.

[Translation]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM

(Response to question raised by Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck on October 4, 2011)

The Veterans Independence Program (VIP) was established in 1981 by Veterans Affairs Canada. The intent of the program is to assist veterans to remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities as long as possible by providing a range of services.

Eligibility for the Veterans Independence Program (VIP) has evolved over the years to meet the needs of Veterans, their primary care-givers and other eligible clients. The most recent change to Veterans Independence Program (VIP) eligibility occurred in 2008. At that time, eligibility was expanded to include low-income or disabled survivors of certain war service Veterans who were not receiving Veterans Independence Program (VIP) housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance benefits when the Veteran passed away. This was the first time these benefits were made available to survivors of Veterans who had not been receiving the benefits prior to the death of the Veteran.

This expansion addresses the situation where the traditional war Veteran received a disability pension or the War Veterans Allowance but was not receiving Veterans Independence Program (VIP) housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance benefits at the time of death or admission to a health care facility. As a result, the survivor never had the opportunity to access Veterans Independence Program (VIP) housekeeping and grounds maintenance services. With this expansion, those most in need — low-income or disabled survivors — may have the help they need to remain in their homes. It also honours the commitment of the survivors to our Veterans, recognizing their years of support which enabled our Veterans to remain independent in their homes as long as possible.

Veterans Affairs Canada encourages Veterans to apply for Veterans Independence Program (VIP) services when a health need arises to ensure that those in need can receive

Veterans Independence Program (VIP) services while they are still able to, and before they are admitted to a long-term care facility.

Veterans Affairs Canada continues to look at ways to improve programs and services. This will ensure Veterans and their care-givers who have the greatest need for Veterans Independence Program (VIP) services will have the help they need to remain independent in their homes and communities.

Approximately 108,000 clients of all ages benefit from Veterans Independence Program (VIP) services.

[English]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORT FOR WAPIKONI MOBILE

(Response to question raised by Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette on September 29, 2011)

The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of helping youth facing barriers to employment to acquire the skills, knowledge and work experience they need to participate in the job market.

The Skills Link Program provides funding for projects that help these youth to develop the broad range of skills and work experience needed in today's labour market.

Based on the number of applications received each year, the Skills Link Program is clearly very popular with community organizations, employers and youth.

The Government of Canada's goal is to fund quality projects that meet community needs. However, it receives many good quality proposals and not all can be approved with the funding available.

[Translation]

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck on June 22, 2011)

Youth and Employment Strategy (YES):

- **Skills Link** - helps young people who face more barriers to employment than others, find employment to help them gain valuable work skills. These individuals could be high school dropouts, single parents, Aboriginal youth, young persons with disabilities, youth in rural areas or newcomers. 17,465 youth were assisted through this program in 2010-2011.

- **Career Focus** - helps post-secondary graduates develop advanced work skills, through work experience, to find careers in their field of study. 2,537 youth were assisted through this program in 2010-2011, (this does not include those assisted through the International Academic Mobility program).
- **Canada Summer Jobs** - provides funding for not-for-profit organizations, public-sector employers, and small businesses with 50 or fewer employees to create summer job opportunities for students between the ages of 15 and 30. Some 36, 908 youth were assisted through this program in 2010-2011.
- **Youth Awareness** — The Youth Awareness (YA) Program is composed of Skills Competitions and awareness activities promoting youth as a viable source of labour for employers to address their human resources needs.

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS):

The Government of Canada has invested \$1.68B in the ASETS over five years (2010-2015). This investment supports over 80 Aboriginal organizations to deliver and develop labour market programs and services targeted to the unique needs of their clients. These programs and services include measures for youth. There is no specific funding allocation for youth; however, on average, approximately 30,000 youth per year are served under ASETS and its predecessor program, the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS).

Trades and Apprenticeship:

The Government of Canada provides incentives to apprentices and employers to encourage apprenticeship training and stimulate employment in the skilled trades. Apprenticeship Grants are designed to encourage more Canadians to pursue and complete apprenticeship programs in the Red Seal trades.

The **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG)** is a taxable cash grant of \$1,000 per year for registered apprentices once they have successfully completed the technical, in-school and on-the-job requirements of their first or second year/level (or equivalent) of an apprenticeship program in a designated Red Seal trade for a lifetime maximum grant of \$2,000. As of September 11, 2011, 219,965 AIGs were issued nationally to eligible apprentices since the program's inception in 2007.

The **Apprenticeship Completion Grant (ACG)** provides an additional \$2,000 taxable cash grant to registered apprentices upon completion of apprenticeship training and receipt of journey person certification in a designated Red Seal trade. As of September 11, 2011, 57,004 ACGs were issued since the program's inception in 2009.

Both the AIG and the ACG are administered by HRSDC and delivered by Service Canada. More information can be found by visiting the Service Canada website at: www.servicecanada.gc.ca/apprenticeship.

Building on the Apprenticeship Grants, 2011 Budget announced that occupational, trade and professional examination fees will be eligible for the Tuition Tax Credit.

Labour Market Agreements (LMA) and Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs):

LMA and LMDAs are bilateral agreements between Canada and the Provinces and Territories (P/Ts) through which Canada provides financial support for P/T labour market programs and services to address current and emerging labour market needs and priorities.

LMAAs are funded at \$3 billion over six fiscal years (2008-09 to 2013-14). Under the Economic Action Plan, an additional \$500 million was provided over two fiscal years (2009-10 and 2010-11) for the Strategic Training and Transition Fund (STTF), which was delivered through the LMAAs.

The P/Ts may use LMA funding to provide assistance to improving the labour force participation of groups that are under-represented in the labour market. Eligible clients are:

- unemployed persons who are not eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits (including, but not limited to, youth, Aboriginals, immigrants, new entrants to the labour market, older workers, people with disabilities, social assistance recipients, unemployed individuals previously self-employed, and women) and;
- employed persons who do not have a high school diploma or recognized certification, or have low levels of literacy and essential skills.

In 2009-10, the LMAAs assisted 126,730 individuals who self-identified themselves as youth. This represents roughly 36 per cent of the total individuals assisted. Information on individuals assisted in 2010-11 has not yet been received from the P/Ts.

LMDAs are funded at \$1.95 billion annually. Under the Economic Action Plan, LMDAs were given additional funds of \$1 billion over two fiscal years (2009-10 and 2010-11). Under the LMDAs, P/Ts assist unemployed Canadians to find work through skills and employment programs and services. For the benefit-based programs (such as skills development, wage subsidies, and self-employment assistance), eligible clients are unemployed individuals who are currently eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits or who have collected EI benefits in the past three to five years. The employment measures (such as employment assistance services) are available to the unemployed, regardless of their eligibility for EI benefits.

In 2009-10, the LMDAs assisted approximately 118,352 individuals aged 15-24, representing 18 per cent of all individuals assisted.

Canada Student Loans Program

[English]

Summary:

Program	Number of Students Assisted (2009-10 academic year)
Canada Student Loans	404,000
Canada Student Grants	295,000
Repayment Assistance Plan	160,000

Background:

The Government of Canada (GoC) supports post-secondary students through the provision of loans and non-repayable grants. Following the completion of studies, the GoC provides repayment assistance for borrowers experiencing difficulty making their Canada Student Loan payments.

For the 2009-2010 academic year:

- Student Loans were disbursed to 404,000 students;
- Canada Student Grants were disbursed to 295,000 students; and
- 160,000 borrowers in repayment received assistance through the Repayment Assistance Plan.

In addition to the supports identified above, the GoC recently announced through Budget 2011 the following new measures to assist full- and part-time post-secondary students in Canada:

- An increase to the in-study income exemption from \$50 per week to \$100 per week. It is expected that this measure will assist approximately 100,000 students each year by allowing them to work more without affecting the amount of loans they receive.
- An increase to the eligibility thresholds used to assess eligibility for part-time Canada Student Loans and Grants. This measure will allow more students to qualify for part-time assistance.
- Reducing the in-study interest rate charged on loans for part-time students from prime plus 2.5 per cent to zero, bringing it in line with that charged on loans for full-time students.

As well, beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year, the GoC will forgive a portion of Canada Student Loans for new family physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners who agree to work in under-served rural and remote communities, including communities that provide health services to First Nations and Inuit populations.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RECREATIONAL ATLANTIC SALMON FISHING

ECONOMIC BENEFITS—INQUIRY— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Michael A. Meighen rose pursuant to notice of December 8, 2011:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the economic benefits of recreational Atlantic salmon fishing in Canada.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak on this inquiry into the economic benefits of recreational Atlantic salmon fishing in Canada. Let me say at the outset that they are substantial and of critical importance to the well-being of many rural areas in Quebec and Atlantic Canada, where there are few, if any, alternatives.

Many of you are aware of the work of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, or ASF. Since 1948, ASF has engaged in efforts to save wild salmon from the detrimental effects of habitat loss, over-harvesting and pollution. In support of these conservation and restoration objectives, ASF has a conservation network made up of seven regional councils in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Maine and western New England. ASF also has 120 affiliated local watershed groups that represent more than 30,000 conservation volunteers.

ASF does work that is integral to ensuring the health of this natural resource. Wild Atlantic salmon represent an important part of Quebec and Atlantic Canada's culture and heritage. Through its conservation and restoration efforts, ASF is committed to ensuring that wild Atlantic salmon will continue to be a salient social and economic resource for future generations.

• (1540)

Honourable senators, while the history of the existence of wild Atlantic salmon has been characterized by repeated instances of over-exploitation, ineffective conservation actions and a gradually declining presence, there are reasons to be guardedly optimistic about the future.

[Translation]

Here are some data to shed light on the situation. In less than 300 years, the wild Atlantic salmon population shrunk by 90 per cent. More recently, the number of wild Atlantic salmon, which return to spawn in North American rivers, dropped by 1.8 million in 1973 and reached an unprecedented level of just 418,000 in 2001.

But since 2001, thanks to measures such as the agreement the Atlantic Salmon Federation reached with fishers in Greenland to suspend their commercial fishery, the increased number of line

fishers, who release their catch, and habitat restoration initiatives, the salmon population has rebounded slightly and reached over 600,000 in 2010.

When the 2011 population estimates are complete, we anticipate that they will show continued growth. I should mention that in addition to the ASF and other groups, governments play a vital role in achieving conservation objectives, which consist in protecting and increasing wild Atlantic salmon stocks, despite financial difficulties and austerity measures.

As we know, Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for the prudent management of our Atlantic salmon stocks. The minister has taken numerous steps to improve management and conservation, announcing a whole range of measures, including prohibiting and reducing the commercial Atlantic salmon fishery in Canada in the 1990s and, in certain areas, suspending recreational salmon fishing and salmon fishing by First Nations, passing legislation to protect fishways and habitat, and gathering knowledge and scientific advice on stock regulation and management.

[English]

Despite these important steps, DFO must and I would add is obligated to do more. In 1985, DFO's budget for wild Atlantic salmon management, protection and conservation was \$25 million annually. Today, DFO's annual budget for wild Atlantic salmon is only \$12 million, a reduction of more than half, and that is without factoring into the equation any consideration for inflation over the last 25 years — a reduction, honourable senators, of over 50 per cent in DFO's budget.

How do we expect DFO, its fisheries managers, scientists and protection officers to do their jobs? How do we expect the department to deliver on its mandate if it does not have anywhere near the resources it requires?

Honourable senators, in view of the recent modest improvements in wild Atlantic salmon returns to Quebec and Atlantic Canada, it is time to determine how we can further measure and maximize the enjoyment and economic benefits of this important resource for all Canadians. With this objective in mind, the ASF retained an independent economic group to develop an assessment of the socio-economic value of wild Atlantic salmon.

Prepared by Gardner Pinfold of Halifax, Nova Scotia, this study indicates what most of us already know intuitively: that wild Atlantic salmon and Canada's recreational Atlantic salmon fishery are important economic generators. Most strikingly, however, this study's conclusions illustrate that there are significant economic benefits from vigilant and enhanced public sector and private sector support and funding dedicated to the conservation and restoration of this iconic species.

Honourable senators, there are sizeable, value-added benefits to be derived from the enjoyment, usage and conservation of this resource. Simply put, investments in wild Atlantic salmon yield net economic returns and enhance standards of living just like any other thriving sector of Canada's economy.

In terms of raw figures, the Gardner Pinfold study determined the actual value of wild Atlantic salmon in Canada as \$255 million in 2010. This figure includes \$150 million in Quebec and the Atlantic region, \$128.5 million of which is directly attributable to the recreational Atlantic salmon fishery. This independent assessment also points out that further restoration of wild Atlantic salmon, with more fish returning to our rivers, more anglers fishing and more ecotourism would of course result in a much higher GDP and far more jobs. In other words, there are opportunities to grow this industry and its economic potential for the benefit of all Canadians.

The study goes on to ascribe an additional annual value of \$105 million to the existence of wild Atlantic salmon by the general public of Eastern Canada. Basically, this is the amount that Gardner Pinfold concluded the general public is willing to contribute each year in tax dollars to ensure that wild Atlantic salmon thrive in our rivers. This assessment went further and probed why Eastern Canada's general public places such a value on this resource. Essentially, they found that the top two reasons for support by the general public for spending on wild Atlantic salmon are the importance of the existence of the species and the importance of natural heritage and ecosystem integrity.

Beyond GDP, the Gardner Pinfold study provides detail about the economic benefits of wild Atlantic salmon and the recreational Atlantic salmon fishery in terms of jobs that it either maintains or creates. It found that spending on wild Atlantic salmon created the equivalent of 3,872 full-time jobs in 2010. Almost 86 per cent of these jobs were created by the recreational fishery and contributed to the sustenance of the economies of rural communities where, as I mentioned earlier, there are few, if any, alternatives.

Please take a moment, honourable senators, to reflect on that. Wild Atlantic salmon runs in Quebec and Atlantic Canada currently support nearly 4,000 full-time jobs. Just imagine how many thousands more good jobs could be created if the wild Atlantic salmon resource was restored to its full potential.

The impact and marketing of successfully executed conservation and restoration strategies are also assessed by this ASF-commissioned analysis. For instance, it concluded that the recent increase in salmon numbers relative to 10 years ago has been an important factor in attracting more anglers and has stimulated spending growth in this sector of the economy. In a nutshell, increased numbers of wild Atlantic salmon will result in increased numbers of anglers and more economic activity. By way of illustration, Garner Pinfold pointed out that more people participated in Atlantic salmon angling in 2010, when there were 53,883 anglers and better runs, compared to 2005, when there were only 41,737 anglers and the salmon runs were not as robust.

Honourable senators, I urge you to obtain a copy of this study and familiarize yourself with its contents. Like other iconic animals or natural wonders that have come to represent Canada's distinctiveness, history and heritage, I think that we can all appreciate the symbolic and environmental importance of wild Atlantic salmon. While the historical decline in their numbers has led some to gloomily predict their eventual extinction, the combined conservation and restoration efforts of recent years appear to be working and should give us cause for hope. Indeed,

efforts by government and non-governmental groups alike seem to have reached a critical mass with respect to effectiveness. The fact that we appear to have turned a corner relative to 2001 in terms of wild Atlantic salmon returns to our rivers should strengthen our resolve to push further. Now is the time to ensure that DFO has the budget it needs to deliver on its wild Atlantic salmon conservation mandate.

• (1550)

Finally, honourable senators, by choosing to frame this inquiry through the prism of the economic benefits of the recreational salmon fishery, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, whose board of directors I have the honour to chair, wanted to underline the fact that conservation is not an end in itself but rather a means to other ends. In fact, as the Gardner Pinfold study amply demonstrates, additional conservation and restoration measures for the wild Atlantic salmon will yield expanding economic and quality-of-life dividends for all Canadians, hopefully for generations to come.

(On motion of Senator Robichaud, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

EDUCATION IN MINORITY LANGUAGES

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool, pursuant to notice of December 15, 2011:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the evolution of education in the language of the minority.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to remind you of the long fight by both of Canada's official language minorities to be educated in their own language. As an Acadian from New Brunswick, I find it my natural role to speak to you about my corner of the country. I will therefore summarize the history of French education in my province to show you how difficult it has been to arrive at our present situation.

[English]

The story I will tell today is the story of my people, the Acadians. It is the story of our history. It has influenced my entire professional life. That is why I felt compelled to launch this inquiry so that this story, our history, could be placed on the record.

It is my fervent wish that many honourable senators will take part in this inquiry and add your own story to the record.

[Translation]

In 1604, at the beginning of the French colonization of Acadia, led by Pierre Dugua and Samuel de Champlain, Acadia covered a large part of what we today call the Maritime provinces. The first recorded school in Acadia opened in Port Royal, Nova Scotia, in

1642. A second school, for girls only, opened next door and was run by Jeanne Brice, the first woman teacher in Acadia. However, these two schools closed their doors when the city was captured by the British in 1654.

Confessional education continued throughout the rest of the 17th century and girls were supervised by women who belonged to the Notre-Dame, Filles de la Croix and other religious orders. But the situation changed with the British conquest of Acadia in 1710 and the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Protestant British conquerors sent many of the French elite and members of Catholic religious communities back to France, leaving the Acadian population to fend for themselves until the 1755 deportation, the Great Upheaval that ended in 1758.

In 1764, a British decree allowed for the return of Acadian families and the rebirth of education in French. Some 20 years later, in 1784, the British colony of New Brunswick was officially created. At the time, most education was provided by the all powerful Church. Girls were generally entitled only to primary education, as they were not deemed to have enough intelligence for higher education.

[English]

In 1792, the New Brunswick Assembly started to take an interest in education. The 1802 Parish School Act, the first ever dealing with education, gave responsibility for public education in parish schools to justices of the peace in each county, with school trustees taken over. This apartheid system of mostly English-speaking schools was supplemented among the ill-educated French-speaking population with an informal network of missionaries and traveling teachers.

[Translation]

In 1819, the first formal public education system in English was established. Some of its teachers were Acadian, including the first documented female teacher in my province, Rosalie Cormier, in the county of Westmorland, in 1830. However, this first system was underappreciated by the public and underfunded. The School Act of 1833, revised in 1837, established a structured system for parish schools, but primary school teachers were often incompetent and student attendance was voluntary.

In the 1840s, the government began to recognize French Catholic teachers. In 1847, through revised education legislation, the government tried to improve access to education and its quality, and some Acadian French schools started to receive subsidies from the province. It is interesting to note that in 1850, there were more female than male primary school teachers. The reason is sad, though, and was based only on finances: it cost much less to pay a woman's salary than a man's, which proves that today's fight for pay equity did not just start yesterday . . .

[English]

In 1848, we see the launch of two training schools in Fredericton and Saint John. There, would-be teachers underwent a 10-week training program and New Brunswick appointed its first chief school superintendent in 1852, adopting a new Parish Schools Act.

Yet, for all these improvements, education financing remains voluntary and the responsibility of parents. Unfortunately, this lead to unintended consequences. Rather than pay to educate their children, parents preferred to have them work instead, bringing in much-needed money.

[Translation]

In 1852, there were only 29 officially recorded francophone teachers in New Brunswick. Two years later, an all-boys' school for future priests and teachers, Séminaire Saint-Thomas, was established in Memramcook and run by the Holy Cross Fathers. Girls went to Académie de Madawaska, which was run by the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception. In the 1870s, many other girls' schools opened across the province and were run by the Hospitallers of St. Joseph, the Sisters of Notre-Dame-du-Sacré-Cœur or the Marist Sisters. I am thinking here of the very beautiful Académie Sainte-Famille, which is located in my hometown of Tracadie, where I went to school when I was young.

In 1870, the government closed all the Training Schools in the province and replaced them with a new Normal School, which centralized teacher training in Fredericton. In 1871, in response to the failure of the 1858 act, a new act, the Act Relating to Common Schools, rendered elementary and secondary schools non-denominational and made school taxes mandatory. This new legislation incurred the wrath of the province's Catholic population, including francophones who, upon seeing the removal of their Church from the education sector, feared greater linguistic assimilation. These Catholics refused to finance an atheist school system, and provincial authorities decided to crack down on them and their priests. This repression by authorities led to an incident in Caraquet that all Acadians now know as the Louis Mailloux affair.

Later that same year, in reaction to this serious school crisis and in order to ease tensions, the Executive Council granted Catholics a limited right to catechism. It also granted francophones the right to an elementary school education in French. However, everything else fell within the secular curriculum.

In 1878, the Normal School, which provided teacher training in Fredericton, began a preparatory program that specifically targeted francophone teachers. This program became a proper department in 1884. In 1898, the seminary in Memramcook officially became Université Saint-Joseph, the province's first francophone university. In 1899, the priests of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary founded the Collège du Sacré-Cœur in Caraquet. It became a university in 1914 and, in 1916, it moved to Bathurst to a magnificent building that still exists and is still used as a school today. If I seem to be dwelling on the role that religious communities played in education in my province, it is because they were extremely important to French education.

• (1600)

The convents run by the sisters trained many teachers who helped to educate generations of children, as well as to preserve the French language and Acadian culture. Classical colleges run by priests — as along with the francophone department of the Normal School in Fredericton and its first director, Alphonse Belliveau — helped to train educators.

However, it was not really until the beginning of the 20th century that Acadians became convinced that a good education would ensure a strong future and took charge on all fronts: occupational training, textbooks, resources, establishment of classes by education level, literacy enhancement and everything else. In 1911, the first meeting of New Brunswick French teachers took place in Saint-Louis-de-Kent for the purposes of discussion and training. Around the same time, the first Acadian textbooks were published for the province's francophone minority. In 1922, the first major reform of education legislation took place.

[English]

Please remember that French was not yet officially accepted in schools at that time. The government waited until 1928 before it accepted the creation of bilingual schools in the province, thereby granting legal status to French. A year later, however, the government rescinded this status under pressure from provincial Orangemen. In 1932 the Macfarlane Inquiry, set up the year before, tabled its report on the status of the provincial school system. That inquiry recommended that primary education be given in the child's mother tongue. This would not happen until the 1940s, however, again owing to obstruction by the provincial Orangemen.

[Translation]

In 1936, the New Brunswick Department of Education was officially established. That same year, francophone teachers were trained during the summer at Université St-Joseph in Memramcook and Université du Sacré-Cœur in Bathurst. Also in 1936, the Association acadienne d'éducation was established; in 1946 it became the Association des instituteurs acadiens, and in 1967 the Association des enseignants francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, or AEFNB. In 1983, I had the honour of being the first woman president of that association.

In 1960, the government of the honourable Louis J. Robichaud took office. That gave a great deal of hope to Acadians in my province and brought new reforms in the provincial education sector. The Université de Moncton, the third Francophone university — the first secular one in the province — was established. It incorporated Memramcook's Université St-Joseph and Bathurst's Université Sacré-Cœur.

In 1967, in keeping with its "Equal Opportunity for All" program, the government standardized school taxes and teachers' salaries across the province and took over funding of the education system from the counties. This ended the disparity in financial means available to schools. In 1968, the government opened the École normale francophone on the campus of the Université de Moncton, which later became the university's faculty of education.

[English]

Taking over from the Honourable Louis J. Robichaud in 1970, the government of the Honourable Richard Hatfield continued to implement his predecessor's reforms and 1972 saw the launch of the 11-campus provincial network of the New Brunswick Community College. The community college provided technical and professional training in a number of fields, thereby allowing

high school graduates to train for a job without going through university. Of the 11 campuses of the NBCC, five are French-speaking, including one in the Acadian peninsula in northeastern New Brunswick. The other six are English-speaking.

[Translation]

In 1973, a joint (English and French) committee of the Department of Education conducted an indepth review of the province's public education system. The following year, the department was divided into three large sections: one for French education, the second for English education, and the third section for administration and finances to support the first two sections. It was duality in education. In 1980, the province was divided into 14 French or English school boards and the bilingual school boards that offended the francophone population were abolished.

In 1981, the provincial government passed legislation recognizing the equality of the official language communities. Shortly afterward, the government overhauled the school act to implement a language-based school system, signalling the end of the bilingual schools that were considered to be tools for linguistic assimilation.

The most recent education reform occurred in 1985. To obtain a secondary school diploma used to require the successful completion of mandatory courses and passing departmental exams. In 1991, the province created a public network of

optional kindergartens. In May 2010, the Community College and its 11 campuses began a transition process to branch off from the Department of Education and become an independent business by March 2013.

Honourable senators, may I have two more minutes?

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Losier-Cool: Next summer, as part of its budget cuts, the government plans to cut the number of school boards in half and keep only four anglophone and three francophone boards.

And that, honourable senators is the history of French education in my province. You will agree that the road was hard and that the human and financial costs that were paid for such a long time to get to where we are now were fully warranted. The benefits we now enjoy are the result of a long struggle, which we hope is now over, at least in New Brunswick.

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, February 1, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

Officers of the Senate

The Ministry

Senators

(Listed according to seniority, alphabetically and by provinces)

THE SPEAKER

The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella

THE LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Honourable Marjory LeBreton, P.C.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

The Honourable James S. Cowan

OFFICERS OF THE SENATE**CLERK OF THE SENATE AND CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS**

Gary W. O'Brien

LAW CLERK AND PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

Mark Audcent

USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

Kevin MacLeod

THE MINISTRY

(In order of precedence)

(January 31, 2012)

The Right Hon. Stephen Joseph Harper	Prime Minister
The Hon. Robert Douglas Nicholson	Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Hon. Marjory LeBreton	Leader of the Government in the Senate
The Hon. Peter Gordon MacKay	Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Vic Toews	Minister of Public Safety
The Hon. Rona Ambrose	Minister of Public Works and Government Services
	Minister of State (Status of Women)
The Hon. Diane Finley	Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development
The Hon. Beverley J. Oda	Minister of International Cooperation
The Hon. John Baird	Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. Tony Clement	President of the Treasury Board
	Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario
	Minister of Finance
The Hon. James Michael Flaherty	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Peter Van Loan	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
The Hon. Jason Kenney	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Hon. Gerry Ritz	Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
	Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)
The Hon. Christian Paradis	Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages
The Hon. James Moore	Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
The Hon. Denis Lebel	Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec
	Minister of Health
The Hon. Leona Aglukkaq	Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
	Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway
The Hon. Keith Ashfield	Minister of the Environment
	Minister of Labour
The Hon. Peter Kent	Minister of National Revenue
The Hon. Lisa Raitt	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
The Hon. Gail Shea	Minister of Veterans Affairs
The Hon. John Duncan	Minister of International Trade
The Hon. Steven Blaney	Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway
The Hon. Edward Fast	Minister of Natural Resources
	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
The Hon. Joe Oliver	President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada
The Hon. Peter Penashue	Associate Minister of National Defence
	Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)
The Hon. Julian Fantino	Minister of State and Chief Government Whip
The Hon. Bernard Valcourt	Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)
	Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)
The Hon. Gordon O'Connor	Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)
The Hon. Maxime Bernier	Minister of State (Transport)
The Hon. Diane Ablonczy	Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)
	Minister of State (Finance)
The Hon. Lynne Yelich	Minister of State (Democratic Reform)
The Hon. Steven John Fletcher	Minister of State (Seniors)
The Hon. Gary Goodyear	Minister of State (Sport)
The Hon. Ted Menzies	
The Hon. Tim Uppal	
The Hon. Alice Wong	
The Hon. Bal Gosal	

SENATORS OF CANADA

ACCORDING TO SENIORITY

(January 31, 2012)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
Anne C. Cools	Toronto Centre-York	Toronto, Ont.
Charlie Watt	Inkerman	Kuujuuaq, Que.
Joyce Fairbairn, P.C.	Lethbridge	Lethbridge, Alta.
Colin Kenny	Rideau	Ottawa, Ont.
Pierre De Bané, P.C.	De la Vallière	Montreal, Que.
Ethel Cochrane	Newfoundland and Labrador	Port-au-Port, Nfld. & Lab.
Gerald J. Comeau	Nova Scotia	Saulnierville, N.S.
Consiglio Di Nino	Ontario	Downsview, Ont.
Donald H. Oliver	South Shore	Halifax, N.S.
Noël A. Kinsella, <i>Speaker</i>	Fredericton-York-Sunbury	Fredericton, N.B.
Michael Arthur Meighen	St. Marys	Toronto, Ont.
Janis G. Johnson	Manitoba	Gimli, Man.
A. Raynell Andreychuk	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Jean-Claude Rivest	Stadacona	Quebec, Que.
Terrance R. Stratton	Red River	St. Norbert, Man.
David Tkachuk	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
W. David Angus	Alma	Montreal, Que.
Pierre Claude Nolin	De Salaberry	Quebec, Que.
Marjory LeBreton, P.C.	Ontario	Manotick, Ont.
Gerry St. Germain, P.C.	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler	Maple Ridge, B.C.
Rose-Marie Losier-Cool	Tracadie	Tracadie-Sheila, N.B.
Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C.	Bedford	Montreal, Que.
Marie-P. Poulin	Nord de l'Ontario/Northern Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Wilfred P. Moore	Stanhope St./South Shore	Chester, N.S.
Fernand Robichaud, P.C.	New Brunswick	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
Catherine S. Callbeck	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque, P.E.I.
Serge Joyal, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal, Que.
Francis William Mahovlich	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.
Joan Thorne Fraser	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.
Vivienne Poy	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.
George Furey	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Nick G. Sibbeston	Northwest Territories	Fort Simpson, N.W.T.
Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.
Elizabeth M. Hubley	Prince Edward Island	Kensington, P.E.I.
Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.
Joseph A. Day	Saint John-Kennebecasis	Hampton, N.B.
George S. Baker, P.C.	Newfoundland and Labrador	Gander, Nfld. & Lab.
David P., P.C.	Cobourg	Toronto, Ont.
Maria Chaput	Manitoba	Sainte-Anne, Man.
Pana Merchant	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.
Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.
Mac Harb	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.
Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.
Jim Munson	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.
Claudette Tardif	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
Grant Mitchell	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
Elaine McCoy	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.
Robert W. Peterson	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.
Lillian Eva Dyck	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.
Art Eggleton, P.C.	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Nancy Ruth	Cluny	Toronto, Ont.
Roméo Antonius Dallaire	Gulf	Sainte-Foy, Que.
James S. Cowan	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Andrée Champagne, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.
Hugh Segal	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds	Kingston, Ont.
Larry W. Campbell	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Rod A. A. Zimmer	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Dennis Dawson	Lauson	Sainte-Foy, Que.
Sandra Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.
Bert Brown	Alberta	Kathyrn, Alta.
Fred J. Dickson	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.
Stephen Greene	Halifax-The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.
Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.
Michael Duffy	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish, P.E.I.
Percy Mockler	New Brunswick	St. Leonard, N.B.
John D. Wallace	New Brunswick	Rothsay, N.B.
Michel Rivard	The Laurentides	Quebec, Que.
Nicole Eaton	Ontario	Caledon, Ont.
Irving Gerstein	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Pamela Wallin	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.
Nancy Greene Raine	Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay	Sun Peaks, B.C.
Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.
Richard Neufeld	British Columbia	Fort St. John, B.C.
Daniel Lang	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon
Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Gatineau, Que.
Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval, Que.
Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis	Rougemont	Quebec, Que.
Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark, Man.
Michael Douglas Finley	Ontario—South Coast	Simcoe, Ont.
Linda Frum	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Claude Carignan	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.
Jacques Demers	Rigaud	Hudson, Que.
Judith G. Seidman (Ripley)	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.
Carolyn Stewart Olsen	New Brunswick	Sackville, N.B.
Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie	Annapolis Valley - Hants	Canning, N.S.
Dennis Glen Patterson	Nunavut	Iqaluit, Nunavut
Bob Runciman	Ontario—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes	Brockville, Ont.
Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu	La Salle	Sherbrooke, Que.
Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.
Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.
David Braley	Ontario	Burlington, Ont.
Salma Ataullahjan	Toronto—Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Don Meredith	Ontario	Richmond Hill, Ont.
Fabian Manning	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.
Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson, Que.
Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.
Betty E. Unger	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.
JoAnne L. Buth	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.
Norman E. Doyle	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.
Asha Seth	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.
Ghislain Maltais	Shawinegan	Quebec City, Que.
Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville, Que.

SENATORS OF CANADA

ALPHABETICAL LIST

(January 31, 2012)

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
The Honourable			
Andreychuk, A. Raynell	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Conservative
Angus, W. David	Alma	Montreal, Que.	Conservative
Ataullahjan, Salma	Toronto—Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Baker, George S., P.C.	Newfoundland and Labrador	Gander, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
Boisvenu, Pierre-Hugues	La Salle	Sherbrooke, Que.	Conservative
Braley, David	Ontario	Burlington, Ont.	Conservative
Brazeau, Patrick	Repentigny	Gatineau, Que.	Conservative
Brown, Bert	Alberta	Kathryn, Alta.	Conservative
Buth, JoAnne L.	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Conservative
Callbeck, Catherine S.	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque, P.E.I.	Liberal
Campbell, Larry W.	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Liberal
Carignan, Claude	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache, Que.	Conservative
Champagne, Andr��e, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.	Conservative
Chaput, Maria	Manitoba	Sainte-Anne, Man.	Liberal
Cochrane, Ethel	Newfoundland and Labrador	Port-au-Port, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative
Comeau, Gerald J.	Nova Scotia	Saultnierville, N.S.	Conservative
Cools, Anne C.	Toronto Centre-York	Toronto, Ont.	Independent
Cordy, Jane	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth, N.S.	Liberal
Cowan, James S.	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Liberal
Dagenais, Jean-Guy	Victoria	Blainville, Que.	Conservative
Dallaire, Rom��o Antonius	Gulf	Sainte-Foy, Que.	Liberal
Dawson, Dennis	Lauson	Ste-Foy, Que.	Liberal
Day, Joseph A.	Saint John-Kennebecasis	Hampton, N.B.	Liberal
De Ban��, Pierre, P.C.	De la Valli��re	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Demers, Jacques	Rigaud	Hudson, Que.	Conservative
Dickson, Fred J.	Nova Scotia	Halifax, N.S.	Conservative
Di Nino, Consiglio	Ontario	Downsview, Ont.	Conservative
Downe, Percy E.	Charlottetown	Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Liberal
Doyle, Norman E.	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative
Duffy, Michael	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish, P.E.I.	Conservative
Dyck, Lillian Eva	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Liberal
Eaton, Nicole	Ontario	Caledon, Ont.	Conservative
Eggleton, Art, P.C.	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Fairbairn, Joyce, P.C.	Lethbridge	Lethbridge, Alta.	Liberal
Finley, Michael Douglas	Ontario—South Coast	Simcoe, Ont.	Conservative
Fortin-Duplessis, Suzanne	Rougemont	Quebec, Que.	Conservative
Fraser, Joan Thorne	De Lorimier	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Frum, Linda	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Furey, George	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. John's, Nfld. & Lab.	Liberal
Gerstein, Irving	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Greene, Stephen	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax, N.S.	Conservative
Harb, Mac	Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Hervieux-Payette, C��line, P.C.	Bedford	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Housakos, Leo	Wellington	Laval, Que.	Conservative
Hubley, Elizabeth M.	Prince Edward Island	Kensington, P.E.I.	Liberal
Jaffer, Mobina S. B.	British Columbia	North Vancouver, B.C.	Liberal
Johnson, Janis G.	Manitoba	Gimli, Man.	Conservative
Joyal, Serge, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal, Que.	Liberal
Kenny, Colin	Rideau	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Kinsella, No��l A., <i>Speaker</i>	Fredericton-York-Sunbury	Fredericton, N.B.	Conservative

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address	Political Affiliation
Lang, Daniel	Yukon	Whitehorse, Yukon	Conservative
LeBreton, Marjory, P.C.	Ontario	Manotick, Ont.	Conservative
Losier-Cool, Rose-Marie	Tracadie	Tracadie-Sheila, N.B.	Liberal
Lovelace Nicholas, Sandra	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations, N.B.	Liberal
MacDonald, Michael L.	Cape Breton	Dartmouth, N.S.	Conservative
Mahovlich, Francis William	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Maltais, Ghislain	Shawinigan	Quebec City, Que.	Conservative
Manning, Fabian	Newfoundland and Labrador	St. Bride's, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative
Marshall, Elizabeth (Beth)	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise, Nfld. & Lab.	Conservative
Martin, Yonah	British Columbia	Vancouver, B.C.	Conservative
Massicotte, Paul J.	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Que.	Liberal
McCoy, Elaine	Alberta	Calgary, Alta.	Progressive Conservative
Meighen, Michael Arthur	St. Marys	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Mercer, Terry M.	Northend Halifax	Caribou River, N.S.	Liberal
Merchant, Pana	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Liberal
Meredith, Don	Ontario	Richmond Hill, Ont.	Conservative
Mitchell, Grant	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Liberal
Mockler, Percy	New Brunswick	St. Leonard, N.B.	Conservative
Moore, Wilfred P.	Stanhope St./South Shore	Chester, N.S.	Liberal
Munson, Jim	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Nancy Ruth	Cluny	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Neufeld, Richard	British Columbia	Fort St. John, B.C.	Conservative
Nolin, Pierre Claude	De Salaberry	Quebec, Que.	Conservative
Ogilvie, Kelvin Kenneth	Annapolis Valley - Hants	Canning, N.S.	Conservative
Oliver, Donald H.	South Shore	Halifax, N.S.	Conservative
Patterson, Dennis Glen	Nunavut	Iqaluit, Nunavut	Conservative
Peterson, Robert W.	Saskatchewan	Regina, Sask.	Liberal
Plett, Donald Neil	Landmark	Landmark, Man.	Conservative
Poirier, Rose-May	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Conservative
Poulin, Marie-P.	Nord de l'Ontario/Northern Ontario	Ottawa, Ont.	Liberal
Poy, Vivienne	Toronto	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Raine, Nancy Greene	Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay	Sun Peaks, B.C.	Conservative
Ringuette, Pierrette	New Brunswick	Edmundston, N.B.	Liberal
Rivard, Michel	The Laurentides	Quebec, Que.	Conservative
Rivest, Jean-Claude	Stadacona	Quebec, Que.	Independent
Robichaud, Fernand, P.C.	New Brunswick	Saint-Louis-de-Kent, N.B.	Liberal
Runciman, Bob	Ontario—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes	Brockville, Ont.	Conservative
St. Germain, Gerry, P.C.	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler	Maple Ridge, B.C.	Conservative
Segal, Hugh	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds	Kingston, Ont.	Conservative
Seth, Asha	Ontario	Toronto, Ont.	Conservative
Seidman (Ripley), Judith G.	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël, Que.	Conservative
Sibbeston, Nick G.	Northwest Territories	Fort Simpson, N.W.T.	Liberal
Smith, David P., P.C.	Cobourg	Toronto, Ont.	Liberal
Smith, Larry W.	Saurel	Hudson, Que.	Conservative
Stewart Olsen, Carolyn	New Brunswick	Sackville, N.B.	Conservative
Stratton, Terrance R.	Red River	St. Norbert, Man.	Conservative
Tardif, Claudette	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Liberal
Tkachuk, David	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon, Sask.	Conservative
Unger, Betty E.	Alberta	Edmonton, Alta.	Conservative
Verner, Josée, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Que.	Conservative
Wallace, John D.	New Brunswick	Rothesay, N.B.	Conservative
Wallin, Pamela	Saskatchewan	Wadena, Sask.	Conservative
Watt, Charlie	Inkerman	Kuujuuaq, Que.	Liberal
Zimmer, Rod A. A.	Manitoba	Winnipeg, Man.	Liberal

SENATORS OF CANADA

BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

(January 31, 2012)

ONTARIO—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Anne C. Cools	Toronto Centre-York	Toronto
2 Colin Kenny	Rideau	Ottawa
3 Consiglio Di Nino	Ontario	Downsview
4 Michael Arthur Meighen	St. Marys	Toronto
5 Marjory LeBreton, P.C.	Ontario	Manotick
6 Marie-P. Poulin	Northern Ontario	Ottawa
7 Francis William Mahovlich	Toronto	Toronto
8 Vivienne Poy	Toronto	Toronto
9 David P. Smith, P.C.	Cobourg	Toronto
10 Mac Harb	Ontario	Ottawa
11 Jim Munson	Ottawa/Rideau Canal	Ottawa
12 Art Eggleton, P.C.	Ontario	Toronto
13 Nancy Ruth	Cluny	Toronto
14 Hugh Segal	Kingston-Frontenac-Leeds	Kingston
15 Nicole Eaton	Ontario	Caledon
16 Irving Gerstein	Ontario	Toronto
17 Michael Douglas Finley	Ontario—South Coast	Simcoe
18 Linda Frum	Ontario	Toronto
19 Bob Runciman	Ontario—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes	Brockville
20 David Braley	Ontario	Burlington
22 Salma Ataullahjan	Toronto—Ontario	Toronto
24 Don Meredith	Ontario	Richmond Hill
23 Asha Seth	Ontario	Toronto
24		

SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

QUEBEC—24

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Charlie Watt	Inkerman	Kuujuaq
2 Pierre De Bané, P.C.	De la Vallière	Montreal
3 Jean-Claude Rivest	Stadacona	Quebec
4 W. David Angus	Alma	Montreal
5 Pierre Claude Nolin	De Salaberry	Quebec
6 Céline Hervieux-Payette, P.C.	Bedford	Montreal
7 Serge Joyal, P.C.	Kennebec	Montreal
8 Joan Thorne Fraser	De Lorimier	Montreal
9 Paul J. Massicotte	De Lanaudière	Mont-Saint-Hilaire
10 Roméo Antonius Dallaire	Gulf	Sainte-Foy
11 Andrée Champagne, P.C.	Grandville	Saint-Hyacinthe
12 Dennis Dawson	Lauzon	Ste-Foy
13 Michel Rivard	The Laurentides	Quebec
14 Patrick Brazeau	Repentigny	Gatineau
15 Leo Housakos	Wellington	Laval
16 Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis	Rougemont	Quebec
17 Claude Carignan	Mille Isles	Saint-Eustache
18 Jacques Demers	Rigaud	Hudson
19 Judith G. Seidman (Ripley)	De la Durantaye	Saint-Raphaël
20 Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu	La Salle	Sherbrooke
21 Larry W. Smith	Saurel	Hudson
22 Josée Verner, P.C.	Montarville	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures
23 Ghislain Maltais	Shawinigan	Quebec City
24 Jean-Guy Dagenais	Victoria	Blainville

SENATORS BY PROVINCE-MARITIME DIVISION

NOVA SCOTIA—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Gerald J. Comeau	Nova Scotia	Saulnierville
2 Donald H. Oliver	South Shore	Halifax
3 Wilfred P. Moore	Stanhope St./South Shore	Chester
4 Jane Cordy	Nova Scotia	Dartmouth
5 Terry M. Mercer	Northend Halifax	Caribou River
6 James S. Cowan	Nova Scotia	Halifax
7 Fred J. Dickson	Nova Scotia	Halifax
8 Stephen Greene	Halifax - The Citadel	Halifax
9 Michael L. MacDonald	Cape Breton	Dartmouth
10 Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie	Annapolis Valley - Hants	Canning

NEW BRUNSWICK—10

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Noël A. Kinsella, <i>Speaker</i>	Fredericton-York-Sunbury	Fredericton
2 Rose-Marie Losier-Cool	Tracadie	Tracadie-Sheila
3 Fernand Robichaud, P.C.	Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent
4 Joseph A. Day	Saint John-Kennebecasis, New Brunswick	Hampton
5 Pierrette Ringuette	New Brunswick	Edmundston
6 Sandra Lovelace Nicholas	New Brunswick	Tobique First Nations
7 Percy Mockler	New Brunswick	St. Leonard
8 John D. Wallace	New Brunswick	Rothsay
9 Carolyn Stewart Olsen	New Brunswick	Sackville
10 Rose-May Poirier	New Brunswick—Saint-Louis-de-Kent	Saint-Louis-de-Kent

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND—4

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Catherine S. Callbeck	Prince Edward Island	Central Bedeque
2 Elizabeth M. Hubley	Prince Edward Island	Kensington
3 Percy E. Downe	Charlottetown	Charlottetown
4 Michael Duffy	Prince Edward Island	Cavendish

SENATORS BY PROVINCE-WESTERN DIVISION

MANITOBA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Janis G. Johnson	Manitoba	Gimli
2 Terrance R. Stratton	Red River	St. Norbert
3 Maria Chaput	Manitoba	Sainte-Anne
4 Rod A. A. Zimmer	Manitoba	Winnipeg
5 Donald Neil Plett	Landmark	Landmark
6 JoAnne L. Buth	Manitoba	Winnipeg

BRITISH COLUMBIA—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Gerry St. Germain, P.C.	Langley-Pemberton-Whistler	Maple Ridge
2 Mobina S. B. Jaffer	British Columbia	North Vancouver
3 Larry W. Campbell	British Columbia	Vancouver
4 Nancy Greene Raine	Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay	Sun Peaks
5 Yonah Martin	British Columbia	Vancouver
6 Richard Neufeld	British Columbia	Fort St. John

SASKATCHEWAN—6

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 A. Raynell Andreychuk	Saskatchewan	Regina
2 David Tkachuk	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon
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3 Grant Mitchell	Alberta	Edmonton
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SENATORS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY

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4 Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall	Newfoundland and Labrador	Paradise
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NUNAVUT—1

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YUKON—1

Senator	Designation	Post Office Address
The Honourable		
1 Daniel Lang.	Yukon.	Whitehorse

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DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION



41st PARLIAMENT

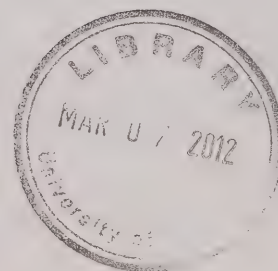


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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Wednesday, February 1, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, just before calling for Senators' Statements, it gives me great pleasure to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, the Honourable Bill Barisoff, M.L.A., who is here on the occasion of the adding to a new Black Rod for the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia a ring from the Senate of Canada.

Joining Speaker Barisoff is the Honourable Dale Graham, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the New Brunswick.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you, Mr. Speakers, to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: We are doubly honoured, honourable senators, to also have in our gallery His Excellency Joo-Hong Nam, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, accompanied by Counsellor Yung-Soo Jung and Secretary Jin-Soo Kim, guests of the Honourable Senator Martin.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

NORTH SLAVE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, I recently had the opportunity to tour the North Slave Correctional Centre and North Slave Young Offenders Facility in Yellowknife. I was able to spend several hours viewing the facilities and talking with staff.

Mr. Blair Van Metre and Ms. Hollis Dimion, the two wardens, were very frank and informative.

These facilities are both less than 10 years old and are constructed to share certain facilities, such as the gymnasium and kitchen. The Young Offenders Facility is designed to hold 25 youth, while the adult centre has a capacity of 148.

At present, both facilities are operating below their maximum numbers. As a result, they are able to provide good supervision and excellent rehabilitative programs. Issues of alcohol and drug abuse are particularly prevalent.

There are also a number of prisoners with cognitive disabilities who are kept in a separate living area or "pod," as it is called. The adult centre houses a few medium security federal inmates whose homes are in the North. The vast majority — more than 88 per cent of the inmates — are Aboriginal people.

Staff have close and continuous contact with prisoners and are able to intervene when necessary. From time to time in the past, these facilities, especially the adult facility, have housed far more prisoners than they were designed to handle, peaking one month at over 190 inmates.

The wardens are justifiably proud of the good work they and their staff do. They feel they can handle increased numbers if forced. At the same time, they acknowledge that overcrowding increased tension among the population and made discipline more difficult. It also strained their ability to provide adequate programming. If overcrowding becomes as serious as it is in many provincial institutions, where facilities are operating at twice their capacity, they foresee major difficulties in continuing to provide a safe, productive environment.

A major concern for many jurisdictions is that Bill C-10 will lead to a rapid and substantial increase in inmate populations in provincial and territorial correctional centres. These prisoners, in overcrowded conditions with inadequate programming, will wind up graduating to federal prisons.

Instead of focusing on crime prevention and rehabilitation, Bill C-10 focuses on incarceration, turning correctional centres into punitive warehouses.

I urge honourable senators to visit correctional facilities in their own regions and see firsthand the impact that Bill C-10 will have on inmates and front-line staff, not to mention on provincial and territorial budgets.

• (1340)

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Just before calling on the next honourable senator, I would like to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the distinguished president of Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Dr. Ramona Lumpkin.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome Dr. Lumpkin to the Senate of Canada.

HOPE IN THE COLOUR OF ORANGE

MEMOIRS BY DUTCH CANADIANS

Hon. Andrée Champagne: Honourable senators, the holiday season brought home delightful moments to all of us. One that was a marvelous surprise for both my husband Sebastien and I was a book. I am certain it will strike the fancy of all honourable senators, and you will want to share those precious moments. The book is called *Hope in the Colour of Orange*.

What is it all about? It could have been about that sentiment hidden in the hearts of most Montrealers that someday all the orange cones will have disappeared from our streets and bridges and that, again, traffic will flow on and around our island. That was not it.

Neither had it to do with the surge of the NDP in Quebec during the last election.

As Senator Dallaire would probably know, this colour orange relates to the Dutch civilian memories of war and liberation. His mother could well be a part of those stories.

Marika D'Ailly made this book possible. Marika was born in the Netherlands and moved to our continent in 1959 after completing her studies. She and her husband Jan lived in Minnesota for a while, then his career brought them to Calgary, Alberta, and then to Quebec, where they lived for almost 30 years.

Marika's love and devotion for the arts is what gave me the opportunity to get to know and love her. Their beautiful home atop Mont Saint-Bruno was a haven for young musicians and singers. Many of them gave their first recitals during her Sunday afternoon affairs.

A few years ago, the now-retired couple moved back to Alberta to be closer to their children and grandchildren. After arriving in Okotoks, Marika joined a Monday morning writing group. She met many people who also had been born in the Netherlands and had lived the war years there. They all started to recount and write their memoirs of those days. Marika put it all together, and *Italic; Hope in the Colour of Orange* was born.

The book lives in recognition and awe of all people everywhere who stand for the universal goodness of humanity and all the contributors who shared their heartfelt stories for this book.

Allow me to hope that you will make the effort to go to www.mondaymorningwritersgroup.com to find out how to get hold of this book and read their stories. They will warm your heart, and your interest will express to Marika D'Ailly our well-deserved thanks. It would be a nice way to tell her that we appreciate her love for the Canadians who liberated her country and those with whom she has spent all those years.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Shashwat Koirala and Mr. Rajendra Prasad Koirala.

They are guests of the Honourable Senator Frum.

On behalf of all senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND NATIONAL PARK

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, 2012 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of Prince Edward Island National Park. With over 21.5 square kilometres of protected sand dunes, barrier islands, white sand beaches, sandstone cliffs, wetlands and forests, the park provides a diverse habitat for a variety of birds and animals. In particular, the park's protected beaches provide a safe nesting habitat for the endangered Piping Plover, a small, sand-coloured, sparrow-sized shorebird.

The park is also home to cultural treasures such as Green Gables, made famous by L.M. Montgomery in her books about Anne, and Dalvay by the Sea, a national historic site.

The Greenwich adjunct to the Prince Edward Island National Park was added only 11 years ago, yet is an area rich in both beauty and culture as it has a unique parabolic dune system, rare plants and animals, and archaeological findings dating back 10,000 years.

Uniquely Canadian, Prince Edward Island National Park is a delight for Islanders and visitors alike, 365 days a year.

OIL SANDS

NATURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING
RESEARCH COUNCIL EVENT

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, known as NSERC, aims:

to make Canada a country of discoverers and innovators for the benefit of all Canadians. The agency supports university students in their advanced studies, promotes and supports discovery research and fosters innovation by encouraging Canadian companies to participate and invest in post-secondary research projects. NSERC researchers are on the vanguard of science, building on Canada's long tradition of scientific excellence.

During the last fiscal year NSERC dispensed nearly \$1.1 billion in pursuit of these objectives.

One of NSERC's five principal objectives is "Building Prosperity Through Research" by connecting and applying the strength of the academic research system to addressing the opportunities and challenges of building prosperity for Canada.

The Canadian oil sands represent one of the world's largest reserves of petroleum, the material that powers our world through its energy and provides the source of the carbon for the principal building blocks of our flexible building materials, our clothing, our medicines and most of our consumer products.

During the past months we have listened in this chamber to a wide range of often divergent views on the role the Canadian oil sands should play in the future of our society. This fabulous resource can be properly developed to the advantage of all Canadians only through the application of scientific and engineering knowledge. Canadian scientists and engineers are doing just that: bringing knowledge-based solutions to the challenges of this great resource.

On Monday, February 6, I have the privilege of hosting, along with Dr. Suzanne Fortier, the president of NSERC, a kiosk-style event where all will have an opportunity, in a leisurely manner, to visit and chat with some of Canada's leading researchers. The scientists and engineers who will join us on Monday have conducted research that has found more efficient ways to upgrade bitumen, explored the role bacteria have to play in the sustainable management of the oil sands, and devised green chemistry processes that can mitigate the impact of tailings ponds, to mention only some of the work honourable senators will have the opportunity to explore.

Please come join some of Canada's most brilliant scientists, where parliamentarians will have the opportunity to get to know of the real challenges and their solutions to bringing this great Canadian resource to the benefit of society. On Monday, February 6, I invite all senators to join us in room 256-S — just down the hall — between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

THE LATE MR. CLAUDE EMERY

Hon. Ethel Cochrane: Honourable senators, I rise today in tribute to an exceptional researcher, writer, fisheries expert and gentleman, Claude Emery, a long-time analyst with the Library of Parliament, who passed away suddenly on January 11, 2012, at the young age of 53.

I know many senators have served on the Fisheries and Oceans Committee over the years, and we all greatly respected and admired Claude's knowledge and skill.

I first met Claude in the late 1980s. I was relatively new to the Senate, and one of my first committees was fisheries and oceans, which, at that time, was chaired by the Honourable Jack Marshall. The committee was a strong and hard-working one and proved to be a great learning ground for myself and for Claude.

• (1350)

Even then, he was known for his meticulous research, his clear concise writing and his outstanding work ethic. Never one to complain, Claude devoted himself to his work. He was a prolific report writer and would produce virtually flawless reports right on the first draft. You could literally pick up a copy of a report and know that Claude had written it because the words were all so well chosen and the content so clearly explained.

As those of us who have been here a while know all too well, that level of skill is very rare indeed, and in this case, I would say it was unparalleled. Claude could seamlessly weave together research and testimony to produce a report that truly reflected the thoughts, opinions and styles of all committee members. Again, as we know, that is an incredible feat.

He could be called upon at any time and would always welcome questions and requests with seriousness, with respect and with patience. Indeed, most often he would know the answers right off the top of his head, but he would always follow up later, quietly, discreetly, with additional information and sources that went to the heart of the issue.

That is just the way Claude was. He was quiet, humble, never one to draw attention to himself but always going above and beyond his duty.

Joe Gough, a former colleague and friend of Claude's, described him best when he wrote:

... Claude displayed a thoughtful, patient, and gentle personality. He never showed off his great knowledge of fisheries and oceans matters, because he had an even deeper knowledge of how to treat people.

... the Library of Parliament and the Senate have lost a gentleman of singular dedication and ability.

Honourable senators, I know you join me in offering sincere condolences to Claude's mother, his family and friends and, indeed, his colleagues.

QUESTION PERIOD

JUSTICE

COMMENTS BY THE HONOURABLE
PIERRE-HUGUES BOISVENU

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and arises out of a news report that we have just received. *The Globe and Mail* article is titled "Murderers should be given tools to kill themselves in jail: Tory senator," and the quote is from our colleague Senator Boisvenu who has been front and centre as a spokesman for the government's tough-on-crime agenda.

My question arises out of his comment, and I will read into the record what he is reported to have said.

A tough-on-crime Conservative senator ... said murderers should be provided with the tools to kill themselves in jail ...

'Each assassin should have the right to a rope in his cell to make a decision about his or her life,' senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu told reporters ahead of a meeting of the Conservative caucus on Wednesday.

Will the Leader of the Government in the Senate advise whether this is the next step in this government's tough-on-crime agenda?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the government has been very clear on the whole issue of capital punishment. The government has made it very clear that this issue will not be brought back before Parliament. I was made aware of Senator Boisvenu's comments. I have also been made aware that Senator Boisvenu has stated he regrets making these comments.

Honourable senators, this was a regrettable statement. It was something Senator Boisvenu said that he regrets. However, having said that, we all live life experiences where perhaps we say things in the heat of the moment that we regret, especially those of us who have had to deal with great tragedies like Senator Boisvenu.

I do not think, honourable senators, that it contributes to the debate to have Liberal senators tweeting equally irresponsible statements.

Senator Cowan: I am not tweeting any statements, responsible or irresponsible. The honourable senator's government chose to put Senator Boisvenu up as the poster boy for the tough-on-crime agenda, so he is not just any ordinary member of the Conservative party, not any ordinary parliamentarian. He is the Conservative spokesperson on these issues, and when he makes a statement like that, I think anyone is entitled to know whether that represents present or future government policy.

Senator LeBreton: I think I made that very clear in my answer. I said it was not present or future government policy. I think it behooves all of us to understand the situation and the circumstances that Senator Boisvenu has lived through in the past and lives in today and also to understand that he made a statement that he regrets.

[Translation]

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, Senator Boisvenu was significantly affected by the tragedy his family suffered. He has endured a terrible loss. The Conservatives have asked him to spearhead a huge program. Do you not think it is inappropriate to turn to someone who has been so hurt and so psychologically affected by his experiences, to ask him to try to sell such a difficult program to Canadians, without recognizing the fact that you are going to continue to exploit this man and cause him further suffering? The end result is what we heard recently.

[English]

Senator LeBreton: That question is out of order and does not deserve a proper answer.

ENVIRONMENT

REGULATORY PROCESS

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, my question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate deals with regulatory reform.

The government has recently announced plans to reform the regulatory process in Canada. As you know, I have often advocated for changes to the regulatory process in the North. Projects are simply taking too much time and have become very costly. Industry needs certainty to succeed.

At the same time, Canadians want the environment to be protected and the integrity of the regulatory process maintained.

Changes can be made to make the system both more efficient and more effective. Efficiency means predictable timelines and no wasted efforts. Effectiveness means that projects with net social and economic benefits can proceed in an environmentally sound manner while dangerous ones are stopped.

The rights of Aboriginal people, whether confirmed by land claims or still under negotiations, as in British Columbia, must also be respected. Recently, various ministers have made provocative statements regarding the regulatory process, especially around the Northern Gateway pipeline. The Minister of the Environment has described his department as a strategic partner of business and talks about improving efficiency of the regulatory process. He does not mention effectiveness.

• (1400)

A paper prepared by government officials in international trade described First Nations as adversaries of the government when it comes to development, and more seriously called the National Energy Board an ally. Although those ministers have disavowed the contents of this paper, there is now a public perception that the government has taken sides and is endangering the integrity of the regulatory process.

What steps will the government take to ensure the reform of the regulatory process is transparent, inclusive of all stakeholders and leads to a regulatory system that is both efficient in supporting development and effective in protecting the environment?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank the honourable senator for the question. He makes reference to comments by the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment on processes going forward to ensure that applications are dealt with in a timely manner. I do not have specific details, because the ministers have indicated an interest in working and streamlining this area. I will take that portion of the honourable senator's question as notice and ask for a report as to where we stand at the moment.

However, I do wish to point out that all of the processes they are involved in now go through a careful and comprehensive review process. The government does stand behind its position and wants to absolutely ensure that any proposal is safe, economically good for the country and environmentally sound.

NATURAL RESOURCES

OIL INDUSTRY

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, the government has made much of the ethical oil argument in defending Alberta's interests abroad and in trying to bolster the government's anemic effort to enhance our environmental reputation abroad. The

argument, of course, is that the U.S. should buy our ethical oil in order to replace the oil that is now bought from places like Iraq, Nigeria and Venezuela. The argument does not work particularly well because it is so transparent that people can see right through it. For example, if it is so important for the U.S. to stop buying unethical oil, what does that say about the kind of oil that Eastern Canada is forced to buy because they are buying it from exactly the same countries?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The honourable senator would appreciate this most, being from the province of Alberta. Resources are important to our country's short- and long-term economies. Our resources in this country are the foundation for the ability to expand, grow and pay for the social services that we provide for our citizens and a host of other things. Hundreds and thousands of people's lives and jobs depend on our resource industries.

With regard to our oil resources, obviously it is in the interest of all Canadians to see these resources developed for Canada to take its proper place as a leading energy power in the world.

I was somewhat pleased, honourable senators, to see the leader of the Liberal Party of Alberta — which was a position the honourable senator once held — take a position quite the opposite to the one that the honourable senator and his leader in the House of Commons take.

Senator Mitchell: We all know we have to develop those resources for the good of Canada. We all know it is difficult to sell them to the U.S. if we cannot make the case that we know and are doing something about climate change. However, the leader is missing my point. The point is if it is unethical for the U.S. to be buying oil from those countries, what kind of position does that put Eastern Canada in? They are buying oil from the same countries.

There is a second feature of this argument, and that is that the U.S. should buy Alberta oil because it is more secure. If it is important for the U.S. to buy Alberta oil because it is more secure, what does that say about the vulnerability to the international insecurity of oil supply and oil tsunamis that the Eastern Canadian provinces are subjected to, because they too are buying that very same oil? What is the government doing about that?

Senator LeBreton: Obviously, the majority of our oil and gas reserves are in the honourable senator's province, and in Western Canada. There are many pipelines, as we know, coming to Eastern Canada. The issue here is access to markets. The honourable senator is absolutely right. This is what is so curious: some of the oil that the honourable senator speaks of that comes from Eastern Canada or to the United States is shipped by tankers, and environmentally, a pipeline is much safer. I therefore realize, honourable senators, that much of the oil supply to Eastern Canada does come from offshore. As we develop our resources going forward, hopefully situations can be developed that will ensure our oil is available not only around the world and to our Asian customers, but also to Canadians.

Senator Mitchell: Now the leader is starting down the right road.

ASBESTOS

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, as enamoured as the Conservatives have been with this argument of ethical resources — defending and selling our resources using the moniker ethical oil, ethical resources — it is interesting that we have never heard them refer in that context to ethical asbestos. Is that because even this government, in its heart of hearts, knows there is nothing ethical about selling asbestos, no matter how you cut it?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I have answered questions in this place before about asbestos. There is scientific evidence that the asbestos exported out of Canada is exported in a completely safe way. It is of no danger, provided that it is used as instructed.

Senator Mitchell: We have scientific evidence that your crime agenda is not going to work, so why does the government not stop that, too?

Senator LeBreton: Senator Mitchell, I actually should not answer that. However, the honourable senator should sit down sometime when he has nothing else to do — which I cannot imagine — and go back and read Hansard and have a look at some of the ridiculous things he says.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

F-35 AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Yesterday, India announced it has chosen the French-made Rafale fighter as their combat aircraft of the future. They decided to purchase 126 aircraft for \$11 billion. There are a couple of interesting things about this purchase. For one, the Indian government did something completely novel and held a competition to determine which plane best fit the country's needs. I quote:

The process was started with the issuing of a global tender in 2007 after which all the six contenders were subjected to extensive field evaluation trails by the Indian Air Force at several locations across the globe.

The Indian government held an open, transparent competition and arrived at the best fighter for their needs.

Further, from a government source:

Eighteen fighter aircraft will be delivered in "fly away" condition within three years and the remaining 108 are to be built by state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. through technology transfers.

That is to say the remaining 108 remaining aircraft will be built in India and technology transfers will occur. This deal goes beyond reasonable benefits and directly provides jobs to Indians in India, unlike the deal that the Government of Canada has been selling,

wherein Lockheed Martin does not provide any technology transfers, there is no guarantee of work in Canada, and frankly, the Rafale actually exists, unlike its F-35 counterpart.

• (1410)

I ask the Leader of the Government whether she sees the wisdom in what the government of India has done. Will she not urge her cabinet colleagues to take a long look at what India has done, thereby possibly saving Canadians billions of dollars and much grief over this F-35 purchase?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I appreciate the honourable senator's question, but far be it from me to answer him or provide to him details or comment on details of an aircraft purchased by a sovereign government of which I am not a part, and that is the Government of India.

With regard to the F-35s, this was a process that was begun under the previous government — the honourable senator's government — and it was his government that entered into this process. This is a good aircraft.

Senator Moore is quite incorrect to suggest that this does not assist Canadian workers. Already, Canadian workers are benefiting from many contracts — I have put them on the record here before — from the decision to participate in this global joint strike fighter program. It is creating good-quality jobs in the aero-technology industry. I would invite anyone to suggest to one of the aerospace industries in Montreal that we should not be participating in this program, because right now they are working on contracts directly related to this joint strike fighter program.

Senator Moore: It may be that the Liberal government participated in the funding of the research with respect to the development of an aircraft, but I do not remember anyone in the Liberal Party saying we will not have a competition to determine which plane is the best fit, this one or some other aircraft. It is one thing to say that we may be doing a little bit of work with regard to some parts, but that is not the same as building the whole aircraft in Canada. It is not the same as having all the technology transferred to Canada. It comes nowhere near the monies that are going to be spent. The latest figure on the F-35 is \$150 million per copy. The Americans are buying them for themselves and are now wondering where the numbers will end up, because they do not know, and they are the ones building it.

I would like the leader to try to reconcile those facts with what she just said.

Senator LeBreton: First, we dispute the \$150-million figure that the honourable senator cited. There are planes that have been manufactured that are actually off the assembly line. They are flying.

As I think the Minister of National Defence and the Associate Minister of National Defence have stated, we are carefully monitoring the situation in the United States with regard to their economy, but that does not change our position that we believe the F-35 is an aircraft that meets the needs of Canada and of our

commitments to NATO. I would suggest to the honourable senator that at this very moment, there are more than just a few odd jobs for Canadians who participate in this program.

[Translation]

FINANCE

STATE OF ECONOMY

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Affecting humility, the Prime Minister told the nations of the world that Canada is a model of good management, but now Canadian economists are challenging his model.

Recently, two Bank of Montreal economists observed a contraction in the Canadian economy and suggested that the latest round of budget cuts could harm our faltering economy. Also, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives estimated that 60,000 jobs could be lost because of the cuts, with the hardest-hit sectors being reserve housing, First Nations health care, support for low-income families and unemployed workers, and elder care.

How can the government tell the world that it is a model of good management practices when its actions have resulted in lower federal revenues and higher deficits, jeopardizing both the economy and the most vulnerable Canadians? How can the government call itself a model of good management when it has cut corporate taxes without investing in research and development, and it now plans to cut retirement pensions?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, we are very happy with the claim, however, it is not the government that is making the claim but the IMF and the OECD. It is bond-rating agencies that have made the claim about Canada's superior-performing economy. I read the report this morning.

Senator Hervieux-Payette often gets up and reads into the record some report of some economist. Oftentimes, with the passing of time, these are just opinions of people who comment on any number of things the government does. Tomorrow in the paper perhaps there will be three or four reports of some other point of view.

What we are dealing with is an economy that has been applauded by the IMF and the OECD. This economy has created 610,000 new jobs since the economic global downturn in 2009. There are many positive things about our economy and our country. I leave it to the honourable senator to find two or three people who obviously have something gloomy to say and read it into the record.

[Translation]

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I would like to point out that my sources are economics experts. I do not think that Bank of Montreal economists would have released their findings unless they were very well informed about the situation. In his

January 2012 report, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mr. Carney, noted an economic slowdown, and this government's proposed measures will exacerbate that trend.

[English]

According to Statistics Canada, Canadians now have a debt-to-income ratio of 153 per cent. I am updating that number because it was 147 per cent before Christmas. The fact of the matter is that Canadians are getting more and more indebted by high-ratio mortgages.

As the leader knows, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney have been warning for months that Canadians have been racking up more debt than they can sustain as a result of a long period of ultra-low interest rates. Of course, the U.S. will maintain those rates until 2014, so we can expect to be there also.

Furthermore, CMHC has recently issued a notice to banks and other lenders that it is nearing the limit on mortgage insurance it can offer them. They are almost at the top of what they can offer.

Will the government commit to tightening mortgage rules to reduce the increasing risk of mortgage defaults and the ease of access to credit that could jeopardize the Canadian financial system and also the economic situation of the Government of Canada?

Senator LeBreton: Absolutely, honourable senators. What the honourable senator stated about the Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Minister of Finance is exactly what they have been saying. They have been clearly speaking out about Canadians being overextended. Clearly, the mortgage rates have contributed to this. The honourable senator's friends at the Bank of Montreal announced a couple of weeks ago with regard to mortgage rates. The government and the Minister of Finance have taken action. The minister has strengthened mortgage rules to protect Canadians from buying a home that they are not financially able to sustain.

I agree with the honourable senator that this is a concern. However, as anyone knows who has been watching the Minister of Finance for the last few months, he constantly is expressing his concern and taking actions to mitigate this problem. The Governor of the Bank of Canada has done likewise.

• (1420)

We know that the global economy is very fragile. That is why we are still working on job-stimulus programs to keep Canadians working. We readily recognize and acknowledge all of these things. The government monitors them on a daily basis and has taken lots of actions to resolve the problem.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: The government made some modest steps in reducing amortization from 35 to 30 years — I think 25 years would be the standard for OECD countries — and also increasing to 5 per cent the minimum amount that people should put down to buy a house; in Europe it is 10 per cent.

I think we just have to adjust. This will take a little bit of courage on the part of the government, because this is one way of at least slowing down the increase in the indebtedness of Canadians.

Is the Leader willing to bring that to the cabinet table and ask them to act on this immediately?

Senator LeBreton: The Minister of Finance did reduce the mortgage life down to 30 years and ensured that people could not refinance more than 85 per cent of the value of the home. These are things that the Minister of Finance does on an ongoing basis.

I will be happy to give the Minister of Finance a copy of the honourable senator's comments here in the Senate, but I will not be giving him anything that he does not already know and is not already looking to take action on.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STUDY ON ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

SIXTH REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the sixth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology entitled *Opening the Door: Reducing Barriers to Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, deposited with the Clerk on December 22, 2011.

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie moved the adoption of the report.

He said: I move that the report be adopted and that pursuant to rule 131(2), the Senate request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development being identified as the minister responsible for responding to the report.

Honourable senators, before I make some comments with regard to the report, I would like to acknowledge some people who have been instrumental in having this report come forward to the Senate. The first in that regard is Senator Callbeck, in whose name this order of reference stands and who brought the order before the Senate and has been with us to see it through to this point.

I would also like to acknowledge Senator Eggleton, the co-chair of the committee, who was the chair for most of the time that this report was under consideration. I want to acknowledge his leadership in bringing this report forward.

I would also again like to acknowledge Senator Seidman and Senator Eggleton for the rather extraordinary efforts they put into helping their colleagues ensure that this report reached a point where the whole committee could, in the end, support the report.

Honourable senators, while much of the debate surrounding access to post-secondary education deals with the issue of the cost of tuition, the reality is that one of the major barriers to accessing post-secondary education is a failure to complete secondary education. Our report deals with these issues, as well as other major issues such as the issue of under-represented groups — there is a whole range of issues in that area — and it also directly addresses the specific issue of the under-representation of males in post-secondary education. The report goes on to deal with a range of financial issues that are important factors in getting into post-secondary education and at the PSE level itself.

Honourable senators, I know some of my colleagues will speak specifically to the report as a whole, but before we go there, I would like to give you an indication of some of the areas that the report covers and where recommendations are made.

The issue of dropout rates is a major factor dealing with not getting through secondary education, of course. We looked at that and we have made recommendations.

The socio-economic issues are so important in the K-to-12 series of issues facing students, which include the family environment. We have the nature of the K-to-12 system itself and the issue of information on the value of post-secondary education. We heard repeatedly that there is not sufficient awareness of the value to young people of pursuing post-secondary education, and therefore dedicating themselves to getting through the secondary level.

We also had the issue of information in a number of areas, including support programs for students. We had the issue of encouraging small- and medium-sized enterprises to support continuing education and training for their employees. Obviously, we dealt with a major issue that deals with Aboriginal issues, the Metis and non-status First Nations.

We have a number of recommendations regarding harmonization of assistance program information and regular reviews of programs. At the post-secondary level, we recognized the importance of research in stimulating students to be motivated at the post-secondary level and to continue their efforts at that level.

We have issues dealing with access to government support programs for low- and middle-income students at all levels, including graduate students; research grants to community colleges; and review of mechanisms for grants to small universities. We dealt with the issue of a national strategy for post-secondary education to remove funding for post-secondary education from the Canada Social Transfer program.

We looked at the idea of a national strategy for the transfer of credits at the post-secondary level and recognizing the issues of prior learning skills, as well as the concept of a national support for online learning, an underutilized area in many areas of low accessibility to secondary and post-secondary education.

We also identified the need for more research and ongoing collection of good data to help deal with the factors that influence post-secondary education participation and ultimate completion.

We identified the need for a budget for pilot projects, with a promise for improving access and participation of under-represented groups. Indeed, we recognized and recommended on the issue that we have had in Canada for a long time, the devaluation of technical and college training versus the idea of university training. We have recommendations in those areas.

Honourable senators, in the end, our committee believes this is a very useful report and, after you have heard further comments from my colleagues, I hope you will support this motion.

(On motion of Senator Callbeck, debate adjourned.)

STUDY ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICIES, PRACTICES, CIRCUMSTANCES AND CAPABILITIES

FOURTH REPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the consideration of the fourth report (interim) of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, entitled *Answering the Call: The Future role of Canada's Primary Reserve*, tabled in the Senate on December 15, 2011.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, as chair of the Standing Senate Committee of National Security and Defence, I had the honour of presenting to this chamber on December 15 the latest report from the committee, *Answering the Call*. It is about the future role of the reserves, those men and women who are truly citizen soldiers. They hold down jobs or attend school, but, when their country calls, they always answer “yes.” We could not have mounted the missions in Afghanistan or Haiti, or responded to floods, ice storms or wildfires without them. They are indispensable to military missions at home and abroad.

• (1430)

After hearing 19 formal witnesses, we recommended, among other things, that the size and strength of the reserves be protected and enhanced in the transformation process; that training be increased; that the pay system be simplified and have a protected funding line; and that we use their specialized civilian skills to better effect in areas such as health care or cyberdefence.

I had intended to speak about this report in detail, to shine a light on the contributions of the reservists to communities across this country, and to praise their citizenship and leadership and their commitment to country. Instead, I must take time today to correct the many gratuitous, inaccurate and mean-spirited misrepresentations read into the record by the committee's deputy chair.

He stated that the committee operates in a partisan manner. To be clear, the senator signed off on the report. Many concessions were made to accommodate him and his point of view. We worked together, we compromised, and time was not our friend. As a committee, we wanted to contribute to the debate now under way on the future of our military, and it was important that the

testimony we heard and the recommendations we agreed upon would be part of the government's considerations. We knew the time frame was short, as much of the debate would be taking place during the parliamentary break. That is why senators, our staffs and Senate staff worked diligently — some of them literally through the night — to complete the report and overcome some real problems with the quality of translation. We asked members on both sides, such as Senator Nolin, to try to edit and improve the translation and to read drafts in French and English to try to reconcile the problems.

Senator Dallaire agreed in private and then changed his mind when his colleagues were present. He had proposed long lists of witnesses whom he wanted to hear from, people who shared his views, and he even suggested we study other studies. Well, all I can say is that my members can read, so I do not know why we would study studies that are complete and available. That is a partisan decision in his mind. In mine, it was using our limited time effectively and wisely.

The deputy chair may not have been satisfied with this report, but others were. Interestingly, the report has been praised publicly by the Canadian Defence Association Institute, and the Reserves 2000 group strongly supports our conclusions. I have personally received dozens of calls, emails and letters saying the report "had got it right." Others noted our report was very helpful in shaping the decisions now under way about the role of the reserves.

That is our mandate, namely, to contribute to the policy and decision-making debate, to be constructive and realistic. It is easy just to stand on the sidelines and criticize or attack; it takes work to do it right.

The work of this chamber is for grown-ups, and I challenge committee members to do their homework, to come with ideas, an open mind and a willingness to work so we can all play a constructive role in helping to shape a new military and security system that works for this country, its citizens and for those who serve it so selflessly and at great risk.

Some members opposite are finding it difficult to understand that the reports of this committee, under my leadership, will be based on testimony and not on the opinions or biases of members. We will not first decide the conclusions and then write a report to fit some personal point of view.

The deputy chair also stated that the committee is run in an ad hoc manner, that our order of reference, which is, in fact, the standard language for an order of reference, was unfocused. The list of eight topics, which he decried as just an array of ideas and not a plan, is, in fact, what I spelled out for the Internal Economy Committee while seeking budget approval. More puzzling still, while criticizing my list of eight, he then sent me a list of seventeen topics that he wanted studied. That is quite an array of ideas and twice as long a list.

At the time of the deputy chair's remarks, I was angry that he would choose the path of personal attack. Upon reflection, however, it is sadder still that, when faced with a choice, he chose partisan politics over the interests of the men and women he purports to care about.

Defence and security matters in the post 9/11 world are complicated and many, and we need to be more nimble and aware if we are to make timely contributions. Since I took over chairmanship of this committee, we have prepared and presented an influential report on Afghanistan. We presented an interim report on the Arctic that set the stage for debate on many key issues, including search and rescue, sovereignty and equipment needs. We also looked at reinstating the traditional names for the services and advised change, and we have now seen the return to the royal designations for the air force and navy that have been embraced by our veterans and current serving members alike.

We have reacted quickly to the issues of the day. An assassination attempt in Washington, alleged to have been the work of a faction of the Iranian government, prompted us to look at Iran and what tools are at the government's disposal to send messages to try to promote change in bad behaviour. Tools such as sanctions and trade restrictions send powerful signals. Just yesterday it became clear that our government had listened to the testimony as it moved to toughen and broaden sanctions.

Honourable senators, reports, hearings and testimony do influence governments to act if one is timely in one's advice.

At our committee, we were among the first to question the new RCMP Commissioner to determine his priorities and vision and to serve notice that we would hold him accountable.

One former member opposite actually suggested that the committee could grab more headlines and attention — clearly what he thought was most important — if we set up a sort of kangaroo court to try the RCMP, an approach often favoured by earlier incarnations of this committee.

Let me be clear: we will not besmirch the reputations of the many, declaring them guilty by association, with the alleged sins of the few. We will hold leadership accountable, but we will not engage in gratuitous attacks — not on my watch.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh.

Senator Wallin: Again, at our first upcoming meeting this year, we will have Lieutenant General Charlie Bouchard, who led the NATO operation in Libya, reporting on lessons learned in Libya, our role in NATO and what it means for future missions. We will hear from him. He is a Canadian war hero.

We will have high-level reporting on the mission in Kandahar and the wind-up operation that would make any corporation blush at the efficiency and expertise invented and employed by the Canadian Forces. We will assess the training operation now under way in Kabul.

I was in Afghanistan in November, and I think both this chamber and the Canadian public would be impressed with more direct knowledge of our heroic and internationally praised efforts from those on the ground. I had the benefit of watching the training mission firsthand; it is well worth greater understanding. The rest of our allies think we are leaders in the world in these efforts. We will use technology to hear reports from the field.

Through all of this, we will be looking at the transformation of our forces through the eyes of the men at the helm of our three forces — the RCAF, the Royal Canadian Navy and the army — and, of course, we will hear from the Chief of the Defence Staff. What could be more relevant to ensure that we are in a state of readiness? That is, after all, the core purpose of a national military.

As we watch our allies engage in the same process, it is important that we understand each other's intent going forward, because, on battlefields or in the skies, we need to have each other's backs. Defence and security approaches must be coordinated and complementary. Policies must match the needs and expectations of our publics and our partners. All of our defence and security issues must be looked at specifically in the context of the special Canada-U.S. relationship, as allies and signatories to shared defence arrangements like NORAD and to shared border accords such as the one signed by the Prime Minister and the President.

These are all issues on the nation's defence and security front burner, and these are the files on which we, as a Senate committee, will render some informed judgment and, in the process, advise government and inform the public. It is a more complicated world. It is changing in real time and issues are interconnected. I am truly sorry that that some members opposite think this is ad hockery. I think it is a responsive, relevant, responsible and timely approach.

• (1440)

We intend to be constructive and critical when necessary, but not as our only intent or motivation. That approach may generate heat but will seldom cast light, just aspersions. It may get you airtime or a headline, but it seldom leads to actual improvements in how our defence and security forces actually function or are funded.

As I have had time to consider the senator's remarks, I have come to believe that he was truly not motivated by either a concern for form or content. I really think this is about loss of control. The members opposite want to run the committees the way they used to and to study the issues that are of personal interest to them or that are in the interests of their beleaguered colleagues in the other place. They lost that right when they lost the confidence of the people. Theirs is a legitimate view of the world, but it has been rejected. Others now have a chance to do it differently and the voters too will pass judgment in due course.

As chair, I do not believe that in committee we should simply point a finger of blame and that somehow that will absolve us of personal responsibility as parliamentarians to solve problems and be realistic about what government can and should do. I was puzzled that Senator Dallaire tried to suggest that he both supports the report and yet feels it is inadequate. Which is it?

Let us focus on the work at hand, which is substantial: transformation in the era of the post-combat mission in Afghanistan and our relationship with the U.S. are as core as our relationship with NATO and its future. We must examine how cuts in defence spending by our key allies will impact us and our operations under way. We need to look at our own state of readiness, as that is the *raison d'être* of a military.

[Senator Wallin]

We will examine proposed legislation that the House sends to us. We will look at how we deal with so many foreign policy challenges and security threats that we face as a nation. As the Prime Minister said:

If you're going to put young Canadians in harm's way, the most we can do is the least we should do:

We Conservatives will give the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces the equipment they need, and the respect they deserve!

He also said that Canada is "a courageous warrior, a compassionate neighbour, a confident partner . . ." whose " . . . purpose is no longer just to go along and get along with everyone else's agenda."

I ask honourable senators — I implore honourable senators — to step up, to put the politics of bitterness aside, and to do what is right for your country —

Senator Mercer: I cannot believe she said that!

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Wallin: — and for those who put their lives on the line to defend it.

You have had your say, and now I have had mine. Let us put our differences aside and adopt this report as a show of respect and support for those men and women of the reserves who risk their lives so that we might indulge ourselves in this free and open debate.

Honourable senators, I ask that the fourth report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, entitled: *Answering the Call: The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserve* be adopted at this time.

The Hon. the Speaker: On debate, honourable senators.

(On motion of Senator Mitchell, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

STUDY ON ISSUE OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

THIRD REPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Jaffer, seconded by the Honourable Senator Chaput, that the third report of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, entitled *The Sexual Exploitation of Children in Canada: the Need for National Action*, tabled in the Senate on November 23, 2011, be adopted and that, pursuant to Rule 131(2), the Senate

request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada being identified as minister responsible for responding to the report.

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, we move to adopt the motion.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

STUDY ON CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE OF FOREST SECTOR

SECOND REPORT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY COMMITTEE ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on motion of the Honourable Senator Mockler, seconded by the Honourable Senator Wallace, for the adoption of the second report of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, entitled: *The Canadian Forest Sector: A Future Based on Innovation*, deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on July 5, 2011;

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C., seconded by the Honourable Senator Mahovlich, that the motion to adopt the report be amended by adding the following:

“and that, pursuant to rule 131(2), the Senate request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Natural Resources being identified as minister responsible for responding to the report”.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud: Honourable senators, I move the adoption of the report.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion in amendment?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted as amended.)

[English]

MENTAL HEALTH, ILLNESS AND ADDICTION SERVICES IN CANADA

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Hubley, calling the attention of the Senate to the 5th anniversary of the tabling of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology's report: *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada*.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, it is difficult for me to believe that it has been five years since the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology tabled its report, entitled: *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada*. As a member of that committee, I still have vivid memories of the testimony of many individuals from across the country recounting their heart-wrenching stories. So much of the report can be attributed to those brave Canadians who shared their stories with the committee. They are true champions and leaders in the field of mental health, mental illness and addictions.

We can hear from organizations and health care professionals here in Ottawa, but it is the very personal stories and experiences that bring home the seriousness that poor mental health can have on Canadians who have a mental illness and on their families.

Honourable senators, the fact is that one in five Canadians will suffer from some form of poor mental health in their lives. This is an issue that affects every Canadian: a loved one, a family member, a co-worker. Everyone, even those in this chamber, probably has someone in their lives who will experience poor mental health at some time in their lives.

When the committee concluded its study on health care, it was unanimously decided that the committee's next study was to be on mental health in Canada. Senator Kirby, who was the Chair of the Social Affairs Committee at that time, went around the table and asked senators what area of health care we should focus on next. Every senator around the table said “mental health.” Each senator on the committee at the time had had a close friend or family member who suffered from poor mental health at some time. Not only was the decision unanimous, but every member of the committee felt passionately about the issue.

• (1450)

Honourable senators, it was quickly evident from our study of Canada's health care system, and as we began our study on mental health and addiction issues, that mental health initiatives, treatment and mental health understanding in Canada was drastically underfunded and under-serviced. As Senator Hubley so eloquently addressed during this inquiry, this was particularly the state of mental health and addiction services in Canada's First Nations and Inuit communities.

As the study on Canada's mental health and addictions system and services progressed, several discouraging themes became apparent: A lack of a national policy or strategy; a real lack of

understanding of mental health issues among the public, leading to the devastating stigma and discrimination of those experiencing mental health problems; and a lack of initiatives and understanding from the private sector.

In order to ensure that programs and research initiatives would operate most effectively and efficiently, the committee recognized that there was a need for a national mental health strategy and a need for coordination among mental health care stakeholders. We felt this would best be accomplished through the establishment of a national mental health commission.

As outlined in Chapter 16 of our report, the commission's mission would be to act as a facilitator, an enabler and supporter of a national approach to mental health issues; to be a catalyst for reform of mental health policies and improvements in service delivery; to provide a national focal point for objective, evidence-based information on all aspects of mental health and mental illness; to be a source of information to government, stakeholders and the public on mental health and mental illness; to educate all Canadians about mental health and increase mental health literacy in Canada, particularly among those in leadership roles, such as employers, members of the health profession, teachers, et cetera; and to diminish the stigma and discrimination faced by Canadians living with a mental illness and their families.

In 2007 this government established the Mental Health Commission of Canada — the first tangible change initiated by our report. The mental health commission is headed by our former committee chair, the Honourable Michael Kirby. As of now, the commission has not published its national strategy but it is expected to do so later this year.

According to some statistics, poor mental health and addiction issues are costing the Canadian economy upwards of \$51 billion each year, a fact governments and, more importantly, corporate Canada are acknowledging. A healthy workforce, both physically and mentally, is a productive workforce.

A great example of corporate Canada recognizing the need to address mental health issues is Bell Canada's Let's Talk campaign in support of Canadian mental health, to help fight the stigma associated with mental health issues. Too many Canadians will avoid treatment for mental health issues because of the continuing stigma around the disease. Despite the high numbers — one in five Canadians — there is continuing stigma and discrimination against those who have poor mental health or addictions.

I will never forget, as a member of the committee, listening to the young woman who attended at our hearings in St. John's. She was probably in her late 20s. She was married, university educated and bilingual. She had been working for the federal government in Ottawa and then she became clinically depressed. She was on leave from her job and had moved back to Newfoundland and Labrador for financial reasons and to be closer to her family. She

started to cry in front of the committee and said she wished she had breast cancer because then at least she would not have lost her family and her friends. I am not sure if senators are supposed to cry at public hearings, but I found myself dabbing at my eyes because it should not be this way for those with poor mental health.

Bell Canada's Let's Talk campaign's national spokesperson is Canadian Olympian Clara Hughes. Ms. Hughes also suffered from depression for many years. On February 8, Bell Canada is having its second annual Let's Talk campaign, where they will donate five cents for every text and long-distance call made by Bell customers to help fund hospitals, grassroots organizations and workplace initiatives across corporate Canada that will support mental health research. The campaign is national in scope and has been well advertised across all media outlets in Canada, including promotion, even at this past weekend's NHL All-Star Game in Ottawa.

The Social Affairs Committee report may not be directly responsible for Bell Canada's initiative, but I like to think that our report is playing an integral part in helping to bring mental health issues into the open and into the mainstream media and national conscience. Breaking down misconceptions and discrimination will be an important part of effective treatment for Canadians who have poor mental health. There is still a long way to go before mental health and addiction issues receive the same status as physical health care, but even in the five years since the report was tabled we are beginning to make some progress.

As a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, this report is a source of great pride for its members and should be a source of great pride for the Senate as a whole. *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada* continues to be an illustrative example of what the Senate does best when we work together.

(On motion of Senator Seidman, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I wish to inform you that Senator Dickson has been hospitalized and is going through a difficult time. I ask that honourable senators keep him in their thoughts and prayers.

I move that the Senate be adjourned.

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, February 2, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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SENATE



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CANADA

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• 41st PARLIAMENT

• VOLUME 148

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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Thursday, February 2, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Thursday, February 2, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

SEAL APPRECIATION DAY

Hon. Fabian Manning: Honourable senators, today we are taking the time to acknowledge and show our support for the commercial seal industry in Canada. Our Conservative government has spent significant time and resources defending the Canadian seal industry against the misguided, ill-informed and grossly irresponsible actions of the animal rights groups. For example, these groups continue to show videos of the killing of whitecoat seal pups, as if it is happening today, when the reality is that the killing of a whitecoat seal pup has been illegal in Canada since 1987.

Sealers are required to carry out a three-step process of stunning and killing, confirmation of unconsciousness, and effective bleeding. This process, originally recommended in 2005 by the Independent Veterinarians Working Group, is consistent with the recommendations of the European Food Safety Authority.

The coastal peoples of Canada have survived for hundreds of years on what Mother Nature provides. Sealing is an essential part of this particular way of life. Seals have been harvested for food, clothing, shelter and many other products, with new and innovative ideas being discussed each and every day.

Our Conservative government is standing up for sealers, including taking action under the World Trade Organization. Our government will continue to fight the myths and the misrepresentations with the truth and the facts of the Canadian seal industry. The bottom line is that Canada has a highly regulated, enforced and humane seal harvest. The actions of some of the animal rights groups have adversely impacted the social and economic well-being of many of Canada's remote communities, both of Inuit and of non-Native peoples, who rely on a viable seal trade for their livelihood.

Our Conservative government will continue to defend the interests of our sealers and will work with our provincial, territorial and industry partners to maintain market access for Canadian seal products. Sealing is a way of life that we are proud of and a way of life that we will continue to support and fight for.

[Translation]

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, it is my great pleasure today to speak to an issue that is very close to my heart. Some of my new colleagues may not know that I learned to hunt seals in Newfoundland, and that I have hunted seals in Nunavut.

Today, together with nearly all of my Liberal colleagues, I would like to express my strong support for seal hunters in Atlantic Canada, Nunavut and the Magdalen Islands, as well as their families.

These Canadians are a living part of our history and our future.

For the past 40 years, our fellow citizens have been caught up in turmoil brought on by multinationals that engage in constant confrontation so they can profit at the expense of the people they manipulate. These multinationals attempt to impose their anti-speciesist ideology, an essentially humanophobic messianic movement seeking to convert society to its moral vision of the human-animal relationship.

It is clear from their websites how these groups work and how they are organized.

For a long time, our fellow Canadians resisted silently, out of the media spotlight, the undeserving targets of insults and slander as the world, and in particular film star Brigitte Bardot, cast accusing eyes on them.

That time has ended.

For the past few years, I have been involved in the fight to restore our compatriots' reputation through initiatives such as the Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals, which has the support of the three provinces and territories in which the seal hunt occurs, and the first seal dinner in the parliamentary restaurant.

I am therefore pleased that my campaign has resulted in the government's official engagement. I would like to congratulate the government on creating a symbolic seal appreciation day in support of seal hunters.

This cause goes beyond the seal hunt. It is about respect for our fellow Canadians who live in isolated regions and engage in a noble occupation. They deserve our continued support.

Today, we salute their courage, their ethics and their environmental responsibility.

[English]

THE NEWFOUNDLAND RANGER FORCE

Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to the 204 members of the Newfoundland Ranger Force, a police force created in 1934 in Newfoundland by the British Commission of Government that administered Newfoundland from 1933 to 1949. The Newfoundland Ranger Force was modeled after the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and policed rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador not served by the provincial police force, the Newfoundland Constabulary.

The Ranger uniform closely resembled that of their RCMP trainers and the Ranger badge was a solid brass disk adorned with a caribou head and inscribed with the word "Ubique," which means "everywhere." Everywhere they were enforcing laws and providing many government services. A number of authors have written about the Newfoundland Ranger Force, including Newfoundland-born author Darrin McGrath, who has recorded the history and lore of the Rangers in his book published in 2005.

Entering the Newfoundland Ranger Force in the 1930s and 1940s was an attractive career choice for educated Newfoundlanders at a time when good paid work was hard to come by. So attractive was the Newfoundland Ranger Force that at least 22 members of the Newfoundland Constabulary transferred to the Rangers, including the first Ranger, Brian White.

Rangers in Newfoundland and Labrador acted as welfare officers and social workers in the rural areas of the province, which included the issuing of relief payments. That was during the "dirty thirties," and much of rural Newfoundland's population was impoverished. Having to decide who would receive the payments was no easy task for the young ranger. As part of their duties under the health and welfare department, rangers could also be charged with escorting patients to the hospital in St. John's. When World War II started, the ranger took on extra duties of patrolling coastlines and scanning for suspicious activities. In October 1942, when the passenger ferry, the *SS Caribou*, was torpedoed by a German submarine in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between Port aux Basques and North Sydney, rangers assisted with the retrieval and burial of victims.

• (1340)

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the Ranger was to act as mediator between rural communities and the Commission of Government because, under the Commission of Government, there were no elections and no democratically elected representatives.

In 1949, when Newfoundland joined Canada, rangers were given the opportunity to join the RCMP. Fifty-five rangers transferred, including my own father. I am very proud of the fact that my father spent nine years in the Newfoundland Ranger Force and then served in the RCMP for many years. The experiences of a number of Rangers have made it into the history books of Newfoundland and Labrador. I have had the privilege of meeting many of these brave men.

In 1980, a memorial plaque listing the names of the 204 Rangers and their regiment numbers was unveiled in front of the Colonial Building in St. John's, thus ensuring that their names will forever remain a part of the history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Today, Canada's national police force patrols the outports and rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador, but we recognize and celebrate the pre-Confederation service of the 204 Newfoundland Rangers and their contribution to the province and the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador.

MATERNAL HEALTH

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, for many years I have worked in various maternal health clinics in Uganda. On several occasions, I have shared my experiences with you. According to the World Health Organization, every 90 seconds a woman dies from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Ninety-nine per cent of these maternal deaths occur in developing countries. Honourable senators, I firmly believe that maternal health is a human right, one that all women in all parts of the world are entitled to. That is why, in June 2010, at the G8 and G20 summits, when our government decided to pledge \$1.1 billion for maternal health, I was extremely proud to be a Canadian. I thank Prime Minister Harper for leading the way on the issue of maternal health around the world.

Last year, while I was in Uganda, I visited a maternal health clinic located near a neighbourhood where I was raised. I have visited this clinic for a number of years. Recently, I spoke to honourable senators about how this clinic was extremely overcrowded, forcing two women to share a single bed. I spoke about how there was no electricity or running water in the clinic, which meant that women who delivered their children in the evening gave birth by candlelight.

I also drew the attention of honourable senators to the fact that women would only be allowed in the clinic if they brought their own "mama kit," which included a candle, a piece of plastic for the mother to sit on, sutures and gloves.

Honourable senators, this past January 2012, I was in Uganda, and I returned to this same clinic. I was very pleasantly surprised. I was informed that the clinic now had electricity and water so that mothers no longer had to receive sutures by candlelight. I was informed that mothers were no longer asked to provide their own mama kits and that there were more beds available for bench patients. When I asked the doctor what brought about such great change, he informed me that the clinic had countries such as Canada to thank, as it was initiatives like the one that our country championed in 2010 that were responsible for these improvements.

Honourable senators, that was a very proud and important moment for me as I saw firsthand the difference that Canada, as a nation, can make in the world. Canadian policies really can change the lives of people around the world. According to a World Health Organization study, maternal mortality dropped by one third between 1990 and 2008.

Honourable senators, I am certain that if Canada continues to take leadership roles on important issues such as maternal health, we will make even more differences in the world.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

JUSTICE

STATUTES REPEAL ACT— 2012 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2012 annual report on the Statutes Repeal Act.

[English]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration which deals with the annual report on internal audits for 2010-11.

[Translation]

CANADA-FRANCE INTERPARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEETING, AUGUST 31 TO SEPTEMBER 7, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Delegation of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, regarding its participation in the 38th annual meeting of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, held in Paris, Normandy, and Pays de Loire, France, from August 31 to September 7, 2011.

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY REGARDING IRAN

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(a), I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on Canadian foreign policy regarding Iran, its implications, and other related matters; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until July 31, 2012.

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Would the honourable senator explain the need to rush? Why

must honourable senators deal with this matter today rather than at the next sitting of the Senate?

Senator Andreychuk: This is a very timely topic and the committee unanimously agreed to study Iran. We cannot proceed to hear from witnesses if we cannot proceed now. Some witnesses are tentatively available or unavailable, and so we wish to proceed to this subject on Wednesday, when we have available space. To wait until Tuesday to adopt this motion would not be fair to the witnesses. We want to be technically correct and as fair to the witnesses as we can, so this is why we were asking for the indulgence.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: So ordered.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "CHARTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH"

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to study and report on the establishment of a "Charter of the Commonwealth" as agreed to by the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Perth, Australia, in October 2011 and its implications for Canada; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than April 13, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until April 30, 2012.

• (1350)

INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN FOUNDATIONS IN CANADA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Nicole Eaton: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the interference of foreign foundations in Canada's domestic affairs and their abuse of Canada's existing Revenue Canada charitable status.

[Translation]

QUESTION PERIOD

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

SECOND-LANGUAGE TRAINING— LINGUISTIC DUALITY

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The government recently announced the elimination of nearly 200 second-language teaching positions at the Canada School of Public Service. Linguistic duality is one of the defining features of Canada's federal public service. These cuts deprive the public service of resources and tools that help ensure that Canadians receive services in the official language of their choice and help cultivate institutional bilingualism within the public service.

The government is saying that these cuts are not part of the austerity measures. If that is the case, why is maintaining second-language teaching positions not a priority for this government, in order to keep these valuable tools and resources within the public service?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have stated on many occasions in this place the government's strong commitment to our linguistic duality and our full support of the Official Languages Act.

With regard to the Canada School of Public Service language training, the government's commitment remains ever strong in the teaching of Canada's official languages. Language training will continue to be provided for all those who need it. The private sector, universities and colleges have the ability and the expertise to provide training to the public service at a high level of service and at a much more reasonable cost for the taxpayer.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Although the government has reiterated that the cuts will not affect the provision of language instruction, I believe that it is quite normal for Canadians to wonder about the government's commitment to the linguistic duality of our country.

Recent cuts at the Canada School of Public Service are just the latest in a long list of decisions that have raised questions about the government's commitment to bilingualism: the appointment of a unilingual justice to the Supreme Court, changes in hiring criteria for senior public servants — such as the chair of the CRTC — where bilingualism is no longer essential, the appointment of a unilingual auditor general, the abolition of half of the positions at the Official Languages Centre of Excellence, among others.

In view of this record, why should Canadians believe that the cuts are not just another step on the road to gradually dismantling bilingualism?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: The honourable senator can list a litany, as she just did. We all know the situation with regard to the Supreme Court of Canada. It was fully debated in this place. The arguments for the Supreme Court of Canada not being under the Official Languages Act are well known. That provision was put in place by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, for very good reasons.

With regard to the Auditor General, he is now in his position. He has appeared before committee. He made a report on the status of his language training, and he is very committed to functioning in both of Canada's official languages. I think it behooves all of us to take him at his word. He is acting in good faith, and I do not know why we should doubt for a moment his resolve in being successful in this area.

With regard to the head of the CRTC, I do not know of what the honourable senator speaks. This is a designated bilingual position. I do not know whether the honourable senator is speculating on who the next person will be. Obviously, Senator Tardif knows something that I do not, but I think the record speaks for itself.

The government is firmly committed. We have expended considerable resources on the road map. We are fully committed to Canada's linguistic duality. However, when we are going through the various agencies and departments of government, our commitment is to find savings. This particular decision is not part of this process now. It was a part of a process before, where the department concerned felt there was better use of taxpayers' dollars and very good training for those who require French- or English-language training in other schools and universities. That does not in any way take away from the commitment of the government to all aspects of the Official Languages Act.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: I can give the minister another example. Last week, a Federal Court judge ordered the Minister of Labour, Lisa Raitt, to appoint a bilingual arbitrator with labour relations experience to supervise arbitration proceedings between Canada Post management and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

The minister had appointed a unilingual arbitrator. That appointment was challenged by the union. The decision handed down last Friday by the Federal Court in Montreal confirmed that the individual in question could not and should not have served as arbitrator, mainly because he did not speak French.

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I must confess that I am not aware of the situation the honourable senator describes. I will take the question as notice.

[Translation]

Hon. Marie-P. Poulin: The minister assures us that for years now the government has been quite meticulous in its responsibility to ensure that every piece of legislation and every decision must reflect the importance of bilingualism in Canada.

The thing that worries Canadians, and what Senator Tardif illustrated so well with her list of decisions, is that there seems to be a gap between what the government says and what the government does. How can the minister assure us that this gap will disappear as soon as possible when we keep seeing decisions being made that fundamentally do not seem to recognize that French is just as important as English in Canada?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I take issue with that comment. The actions of the government absolutely prove that we strongly and fully support linguistic duality in our country. This is a bilingual country, and I would argue aggressively that we have delivered on this commitment.

We are providing unprecedented support, unlike any government before, in the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality*. We are in year three of a five-year commitment of the road map. Today, over 80 per cent of the commitments our government made to this road map have been confirmed and fully funded. Our support includes new translation programs for book publishing, community radio, and funding community groups that need support to operate. This is welcome and was very much needed, and the government has delivered on this.

[Translation]

Senator Poulin: If the government is truly committed to ensuring that its decisions respect the French-speaking community as much as the English-speaking community, can the minister assure us that the person who is appointed president of the CRTC will be able to hear and understand presentations made to the CRTC, in a field as important as communications and telecommunications, in the country's two official languages, even though the official job posting lists bilingualism as an asset and not a mandatory qualification?

• (1400)

[English]

Senator LeBreton: I have already addressed that question in response to Senator Tardif. I was curious when the honourable senator mentioned this position because the government has made it very clear that the head of the CRTC should be fluently bilingual in both of our official languages.

[Translation]

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The government, as Senator Tardif just mentioned, justified its decision to abolish the second-language training program by saying that it had become too expensive, but that bilingualism remains a priority.

Since bilingualism remains a priority for the government, can the Leader of the Government in the Senate explain what directives have been sent to the federal departments in terms of more affordable resources that are available to employees who want to learn either official language?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, the government is fully committed to our language training program. It was decided that the services of the Canada School of Public Service language training could be provided by our schools and universities and have the same ability to turn out the same number of students at a lower cost to the taxpayer.

I think all of us, when we conduct ourselves, regardless of the area we are working in, obviously want quality work conducted by professionals. The individuals who are training our senior public servants or people who require language training, the fact is if they are working in a university or in a language training school, why would one think that the level of training and expertise would be any less than what was part of Canada School of Public Service?

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: Do I understand correctly that the public servants who until just recently were taking language training have been redirected to other resources. When will they be able to resume their training?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I think the training is ongoing. The government is using other resources for this language training. I fail to see any break in the ongoing language training program. The fact is that it is necessary to have qualified people. Obviously, through our universities and language training schools, these people are available. Public servants who require language training are getting it. They are not receiving training at the Canada School of Public Service but from other experts.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: Honourable senators, has the government compensated for this significant reduction by taking other concrete measures that are immediately accessible and available to public servants who want to learn an official language?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: This is available right now through universities, colleges and other language training facilities. There is no break in the availability of language training to those public servants who, by virtue of their positions, require this training. Who is teaching the public servants should not be a concern, as long as the teaching is continuing.

[Translation]

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question, which does not necessarily pertain to training schools. Could the leader tell us — and perhaps I should

know this but I do not — who funded the report that the Fraser Institute published recently on the cost of bilingualism in Canada? Where is the funding for such a study or for such research coming from?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: That is not a question that should be directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. This is something that should be directed to the private enterprise that is conducting the report. My responsibility is to answer for the government, not for every think tank and institute, from no matter where they are on the political spectrum. That is something I am incapable of doing.

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government. Recently, we received statistics on the number of soldiers who were wounded or killed during operations in Afghanistan. The figures are particularly relevant. A total of 13.2 per cent of the 40,000 Canadians who participated in operations overseas suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Today, 6,732 veterans who participated in this mission are receiving help from the Department of Veterans Affairs; this does not include veterans who participated in all of the other missions before Afghanistan.

The report indicates that 158 soldiers were killed in Afghanistan — 138 in action and 20 in theatre but not in action. These cases involve at least two suicides. Where are the statistics on all those who committed suicide after their return to Canada because of the post-traumatic stress injuries they sustained while they were participating in the mission in Afghanistan?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will take the question as notice. I am certain that the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of National Defence would probably be able to provide me with the information Senator Dallaire requests, but there is no question that the mission in Afghanistan, as well as other missions, have resulted in an increased number of operational stress injuries.

As honourable senators know, there has been a massive increase in the services provided by Veterans Affairs to treat these individuals and also assist members of their families who are obviously dealing with the very serious disorder of post-traumatic stress.

I believe there are 17 specialized clinics across the country dealing with our returning soldiers and veterans. I do not have available the numbers affected and being treated in these clinics.

[Senator Losier-Cool]

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: You are absolutely right. We have made great strides since the modern warfare era began with the first Gulf War in 1991. For at least 15 years, before Afghanistan, there was very little support for these people.

Once those who committed suicide because of psychological injuries due to operational trauma have been identified, will their names be added to the list of the 158 service people who gave their lives for the operation in Afghanistan? They could receive the same recognition for having paid the ultimate price while serving their government and their country.

• (1410)

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Obviously the circumstance of which Senator Dallaire speaks is a great tragedy. I do not know exactly what steps have been taken or what kind of system they have in place to monitor and count these individuals, but I will take the question as notice.

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY AT SUN NEWS NETWORK

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

The Canadian Press today reported that at least six federal bureaucrats participated in a citizenship reaffirmation ceremony staged at the Sun News Network studio on October 18, 2011. The event purportedly featured ten new Canadians reciting the citizenship oath. Six of these new Canadians, however, were actually employees of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The event was arranged by civil servants in Toronto at the request of the minister's office, and officials were unable to find ten new Canadians who were willing or able to participate.

The ministry's Twitter feed nevertheless reported, "10 new Canadians are reaffirming their citizenship live at the Sun TV studio in Toronto right now." Talk about taking a photo op to another level.

I wonder if the Leader of the Government in the Senate could explain why the government agreed to arrange this special ceremony and why it actively misinformed Canadians about its nature.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I was as interested in this story as Senator Munson apparently is. This is an unusual situation, and it is unfortunate that it ever took place. It was done so without the knowledge of the minister or the minister's staff.

Senator Munson refers to the Twitter feed. It was obviously believed by everyone that they were in fact people being sworn in. It is an unfortunate incident. The fact of the matter is the minister and his staff did not direct it and were not aware of it.

With that said, I do not know the circumstances surrounding this. It happened last October. I do not know what the lead-up circumstances were, but I would hope that this unfortunate incident does not in any way take away from the very important role and the solemn seriousness of the citizenship ceremonies that are held across the country.

Suffice to say, honourable senators, I was as surprised as Senator Munson was, and obviously this was done without the knowledge of the minister or his staff.

Senator Munson: Honourable senators, there is communication that goes back and forth on this access to information, and one of the quotes is from Mr. Bolland of Sun Media talking to Mr. Kenney's spokeswoman, and she seems to agree, that "It would seem that both of us have a little egg on our face." I think maybe a lot of egg on their faces would be more apropos.

What will happen to those bureaucrats, if it is —

The Hon. the Speaker: Order.

Senator Munson: It is not for me.

The Hon. the Speaker: I must remind all honourable senators that the rules prohibit the presence in this chamber of electronic devices that make noise. I think there is one here that is making a noise.

Senator Munson: Maybe that was Sun Media; I am not sure.

Be that as it may, that notwithstanding, as I was saying, one of the spokespersons for Sun Media did say to Mr. Kenney's spokeswoman, "It would seem that both of us have a little egg on our face." Apparently, the staff member is apologizing on behalf of the minister. It always seems to be the bureaucrats' fault. I am curious now, what will happen to the bureaucrats?

Senator LeBreton: The Speaker intervened and said there should not be any noise from electronic devices in the chamber. For a moment I thought, "Why is he calling Senator Munson an electronic device?"

In any event, honourable senators, clearly this was and is an unfortunate incident. Other than, as Senator Munson said, there being egg on a few faces, I do not imagine there will be much more repercussion than that, except that I again want to point out that the citizenship ceremonies held across the country are wonderful ceremonies welcoming new Canadians into the country, and I would hope that this incident does not in any way undermine the importance and the seriousness of those ceremonies.

Senator Munson: Just to set the record straight, the reason the Speaker called me an electronic device is that I have been wired most of my life.

I think, honourable senators, I will not ask the leader another question because she answered them appropriately.

Senator LeBreton: I will not touch the honourable senator's comment about being wired for most of his life.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Chaput on November 1, 2011, concerning funding for official language minority community health research.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

CANCELLATION OF FUNDING FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITY HEALTH RESEARCH

(Response to question raised by Hon. Maria Chaput on November 1, 2011)

In 2004, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) boosted its efforts to develop capacity and promote research into the health of Canadians in official languages minority communities (OLMC) by developing the OLMC research initiative.

Since 2005, CIHR has invested approximately \$2.6M in this area of research, both through the OLMC Initiative and through CIHR's open competitions.

CIHR's decision to terminate the OLMC initiative was taken in order to improve the alignment of CIHR's programs to its five-year strategic plan. CIHR undertook a broad consultation process with Canada's research community in 2009 to inform the development of the plan. As part of the plan, CIHR is making more funds available through the Open Grants competitions, where proposals reflect the interests and expertise of Canada's top researchers.

In the future, CIHR will continue to support OLMC research through the Open Operating Grants Program and through its relevant Signature Initiatives such as the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research. In fact, a number of very productive meetings have been held with relevant stakeholders to discuss how best to integrate the needs from the official languages communities across its programs which will have greater impact in terms of outcomes in the longer run. The agency invites OLMC researchers to continue to apply to CIHR through these programs.

[English]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIRST NATIONS ELECTIONS BILL

SECOND READING

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Patterson, seconded by the Honourable Senator MacDonald, for the second reading of Bill S-6, An Act respecting the election and term of office of chiefs and councillors of certain First Nations and the composition of council of those First Nations.

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak today on Bill C-6, the First Nations election act. I can safely say that this bill is an improvement on the current situation and is broadly supported by my colleagues on this side of the chamber. I would not go as far as Senator Patterson, the sponsor of the bill, and call it a milestone achievement, but it is a vast improvement over what is. It is an incremental improvement, a stepping stone, perhaps, to what First Nations are really seeking, which is a First Nations-controlled and -designed election system based on their inherent right to self-government.

With that said, I commend the government for listening to First Nations, particularly those represented by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs. They undertook a lot of the work, and their report on improving the system for First Nations elections forms the basis of this bill.

Also note that the bill is consistent with some elements of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples' report, *First Nation Elections: The Choice is Inherently Theirs*, which was tabled in May of 2010.

As we often observe, between the process of consultation and the production of legislation, there are always a few slips. Perhaps that lies in the inherent nature of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Justice. However, I think we can find solutions to these problems. It will be up to the committee studying the bill to listen carefully to witnesses and to deliberate on what those solutions might be.

Senator Patterson did an admirable job at describing the merits of the bill. It is an opt-in bill that provides an alternative to the election provisions of the Indian Act. For First Nations who become part of it, the bill extends the terms of chiefs and councillors from two to four years and permits groups of First Nations to have common election dates if they so wish. This will provide greater stability to communities and allow for longer-term planning at both the local and the regional level.

• (1420)

The bill also removes the minister and the department from the appeals process. Instead, the Federal Court will be the primary avenue to pursue election appeals.

The bill also establishes clear rules for conducting elections and sets out penalties for corrupt and fraudulent practices. These are all good things and should be supported by honourable members.

It is what the bill fails to do that is of concern. The Senate committee heard from a wide range of witnesses when it was dealing with the issue of elections that resorting to the courts for election appeals is an expensive and time-consuming process.

What is needed is a First Nations institution, an electoral and appeals commission that can both support the election process and provide a transparent and low-cost appeals process. It could be used both by First Nations under this act and by those who adopt a customs election code.

That was the conclusion of many experts and First Nations. That was the conclusion of the Senate committee.

This bill does nothing to move us in that direction. I am not suggesting that Bill C-6 could be changed to create such a commission, nor should it. That would require a collaborative effort between Canada and the First Nations organizations, but the bill might include measures requiring the minister to initiate such a process or at least to report back on progress on further reforms to First Nations elections.

Another conclusion reached by the committee was that Canada should do all it can to help First Nations who wish to develop custom election codes to reflect their specific situation and history and fully exercise their inherent right to self-government. Although nothing in the bill actively assists First Nations to move in this direction, section 42 provides for First Nations to be removed from the schedule if they adopt such a code. I trust the committee will take a close look at these clauses to ensure that they do not create an undue impediment to moving to First Nations-designed electoral systems.

It is significant that a First Nation requires only a band council resolution to come under this act but a community vote with a double majority requirement — that is, a majority of voters and a majority of votes — to leave it. Although generally this bill will apply only to those First Nations whose council requests it, there are provisions that allow the minister to add a First Nation to the schedule if it determines that a protracted leadership dispute has significantly compromised governance.

Concern has been raised about this new power of the minister, especially about the undefined nature of the words "protracted leadership dispute." This is another area the committee should look at closely.

Clause 24 of the bill requires that in the event of a tie in an election, the electoral officer must conduct a draw to break the tie. Derek Nepinak, the new Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, has called this process inappropriate. The committee will need to hear why he objects.

However, I will point out that federal, provincial and territorial elections require that in the case of a tie a new election be held. Only in municipal elections are ties settled by lottery. As First

Nations frequently point out, they are not municipalities but self-government nations. Federal legislation that purports to move away from the paternalism of the Indian Act should treat them as such.

Although I believe there are areas where this legislation can be improved, I do agree it represents a significant improvement on the status quo and a useful step in the right direction. I trust senators on the Aboriginal Peoples Committee will take a close look at the provisions of the bill and recommend appropriate amendments.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Are honourable senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Yes.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It was moved by Senator Patterson, seconded by Senator MacDonald, that the bill be read the second time.

Is it your pleasure honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and bill read second time.)

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Honourable senators, when shall the bill be read the third time?

(On motion of Senator Patterson, bill referred to Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples.)

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of the family members of the Honourable Senator Meighen. His wife, Kelly Meighen, his sons Ted and Max Meighen as well as his daughter-in-law, Holly Meighen.

On behalf of all senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY REGARDING IRAN

Hon. Raynell Andreychuk, pursuant to notice of motion earlier this day, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to examine and report on Canadian foreign policy regarding Iran, its implications, and other related matters; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 30, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until July 31, 2012.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1430)

[Translation]

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOMBER COMMAND DURING WORLD WAR II

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Michael Meighen, pursuant to notice of December 14, 2011:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay, despite the resolution of this Chamber passed unanimously on June 18, 2008, of the awarding of an appropriate theatre decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command during World War II, without whose efforts, courage and sacrifice the war and its destruction would have continued for many more years.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today with a great deal of emotion regarding my notice of inquiry to call the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay of the awarding of an appropriate decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command.

Without their efforts, their courage and their sacrifice, the Second World War would have continued on for several more years.

It has been nearly four years since the Senate unanimously passed a resolution calling on the government to take action on this matter. We must not allow bureaucratic obstacles to continue to delay this important honour, which is owed to so many Canadians.

When called upon to serve Canada, these brave soldiers did not hesitate to step forward. As Canadians, we are failing in our duty to recognize them for their bravery if we allow a few administrative difficulties deprive these heroes of this national recognition.

I know the government is working hard on this file, but I urge it to redouble its efforts.

[English]

I also rise on a personal matter. I wish to formally advise honourable senators that I will be stepping down as a member of the Senate.

My health is good; my spirits are high; and my confidence in the future of Canada is undiminished. It is time to explore new chapters. It is time for new challenges.

Before I go any further, I, too, wish to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of my beloved wife, Kelly, our sons Max and Ted and our daughter-in-law Holly, together with other friends — a brother-in-law, a sister-in-law, and friends from other occupations — who are here today with us. I very much appreciate their presence. Unfortunately our son Hugh is working out of the country in Dubai and cannot be with us.

As senators know, it is not only the actor in public life who has a role to perform. Families and life partners, in particular, often face the more difficult task. For the Meighen family, it has meant it fell often to Kelly to serve in both parental roles while our boys were growing up. When I was on the road with committee or here in Ottawa, she was the one who performed daily family miracles that garnered no headlines.

To our three sons, I cannot adequately express my pride in each and every one of you. You have done — and are doing — your mother and I proud. As your father, it is my hope that I have lived up to your expectations. While I was indeed often away from home, know that I tried to set the best possible example for you every moment I was here in Ottawa. In my own small way, I have tried to perform my public duties in the manner your great-grandfather did.

In his final address, Arthur Meighen said:

There is only one boast I can ever make. Not a boast in any triumphant success — not at all — but I think I can say this, which not all could say, that I never rose there and sat down without having done the best that was in me.

I am already confident that years from now, when each of you find yourselves in exciting and vital careers, different though they will undoubtedly be — different from me and different from each other — you will be able to stand like your great-grandfather, having done the best that was in you.

To my sons and to all members of their generation, it is my sincere hope that they will begin to reverse the decline in interest among today's youth in public and volunteer service. Whether at the neighbourhood, municipal, provincial or federal level, Canada will need your energy, optimism and ideas — and ideals — in the decades ahead.

If you choose to offer your name in politics, or through work in public or community service, I can guarantee you the following: You will discover that there is so much more to life, as Wordsworth reminds us, than just the business of "getting and spending."

At the same time, I am confident of a few other things: You will not get rich; you will work long hours; and you will receive little public acclaim.

[Senator Meighen]

So why, youth might ask, would they consider such a future when the monetary rewards of the private sector are calling? The answer, while far from simple, becomes tangible, I think, as one gets older.

In public service one finds the private satisfaction every member of this chamber has felt by making a difference for Canada. The same holds true for volunteerism: the satisfaction of knowing that you have contributed to a cause greater than yourself; the satisfaction of knowing you have worked your hardest to make your country or your neighbourhood a better place; and the satisfaction of knowing that, at the end of the day, you answered your country's call in the best way you knew how.

In paying tribute in the 1930s to Sir Robert Borden, Arthur Meighen wrote:

Happier still are they who, as the shadows lengthen . . . enjoy the undimmed confidence of everyone who shared with them their struggles and anxieties, and who have just cause to hope that when all is over there will be heard from their fellow men the simple and sincere benediction: "He served his country well."

As we continue in an era of economic instability and government restraint, I also ask young people — and my colleagues on all sides of the political sphere — to not lose sight of the richness that the arts bring to society. Like public service in its many forms, the value to our society from this sector and to us as individuals and as citizens is indelible.

The arts are not just good for us; they do not simply add to our quality of life. They are among the things that make life worth living. They are among the things that make us human.

If I were asked to name something in the human experience that compares to an engagement in the arts, there is only one thing I can think of — being in love. It can be perplexing. You can be disappointed in love many times before you find the real thing, but when you do find it, it changes your life.

Art is a way of examining and embracing all human experience, good and bad. It makes us more at home in the world — citizens of the world. It makes us feel that life has meaning after all and that it is good to be human.

Governments at all levels are embracing restraint; they have to. In this I have no quarrel. I do, however, ask youth and politicians alike to continue to look ahead when the number-crunchers present their options. Remember that for each dollar invested in the arts, three are returned.

[Translation]

Above all, let us not forget that society has much to gain from the arts in ways that cannot be summed up in financial statements. Canada's collective imagination — regardless of the economic situation — will always need to be nourished, renewed and clearly expressed. The arts — and the artists whose talents enrich Canada — are, and will always remain, crucial to the development of this national necessity.

[English]

I also ask my sons' generation to start re-engaging with political parties. As I look back today on my own career, I realize more fully than ever what I gained as an individual, and as a Canadian, from my involvement with a national political party.

I was born in Quebec, with family in Ontario and roots in the Maritimes. In this, I was privileged; but after joining what was then the Progressive Conservative Party, my knowledge and appreciation of our country grew and grew. Having been elected president of the party in the 1974, I came to know and love the Prairies, the North and British Columbia. I saw first-hand that solutions to national problems that seemed quite obvious from Montreal or Toronto or Halifax were not so simple when viewed through a western prism.

• (1440)

I also formed life-long friendships with Canadians from coast to coast, and as a member of Brian Mulroney's caucus in the 1990s and Stephen Harper's today, I have increasingly heard French spoken with an unmistakable Alberta accent, and English articulated as only someone born and raised in *le Québec profond* can do.

Through our national political parties, we have forged compromise and understanding. We have also forged a nation. That nation, Canada, must be continually renewed. Our political parties remain the best vehicle, in my view, for each succeeding generation to do just that: renew and build Canada in the best way we can.

I ask my sons' generation to never lose sight of the founding cornerstone of our country and of its future — the partnership between English and French that first united us in 1867. This partnership must remain central to their concerns as they move Canada forward. It must remain so because it is the place from where we came.

Honourable senators, this central tenet has little to do with numbers or percentages, whether in the past, the present or, indeed, in the future. It is, instead, about what we are and who we are as a people, and what we always have been and what we must remain.

Proud partisan that I am, I would still be less than honest if I did not say I have found the last decade disconcerting in some ways. Partisanship should be a way of uniting and building, not dividing. It is my hope that in the years ahead honourable senators will put aside the easy temptations of blind partisanship — to which I, too, have yielded during my career — and in this, as in a number of other appeals to you this afternoon, I echo the eloquent words of my friend of many years and our recently departed colleague, Senator Fox.

As some of you will know, my grandfather sat in this special place for a decade. He served as both government and opposition leader in the Senate, and also as Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the other place.

"The second chamber," he said in the 1930s, "should be a workshop and not a theatre."

He left history the following warning concerning the health of this body:

The Senate is worthless if it becomes merely another Commons divided upon party lines and indulging in party debates such as are familiar in the Lower Chamber, session after session. If the Senate ever permits itself to fulfill that function . . . then the sooner it is abolished the better.

To which I can only add, "Hear, hear!"

Despite my fears, I am also fortunate to look back at my involvement here and recall many examples when I experienced the Senate at its best, as a "workshop" indeed.

[Translation]

I believe that the committees are the Senate's best workshops. One of my favourite aspects of the work during my years in the Senate was sitting on various committees.

In my years here, senators from both sides of the chamber, together with expert witnesses, Library of Parliament researchers and interested citizens from across the country, have worked together in committee to create a better Canada.

In this way they served the public interest and made a major contribution to the value of the Senate.

I look with pride upon the work of our Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, which I had the honour of chairing for the past three years, especially the study on the credit and debit card systems in Canada, the 10-year statutory review of the Business Development Bank of Canada, the study of retirement savings instruments available to Canadians, and the committee's current study on innovation and support for growth capital, which began in 2010.

[English]

I cannot leave public life without paying tribute to the leaders of my party under whom I have served: Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Joe Clark, Jean Charest, Kim Campbell, Brian Mulroney and Robert Stanfield. All have served our nation well. All have left their stamp on Canada's national story. All served with honour and distinction. I am proud to have stood with them.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to our eighteenth prime minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. Over 50 years ago, in Quebec City, a fellow law student at Laval approached me on my very first day. Like me, this young man had elected to study and live in an overwhelmingly French-speaking atmosphere, so it was not surprising that his first words to me were: "Do you speak English, too?" My reply: "Yeah, I get along in it. *Je me débrouille*."

Our friendship has continued over the years. Thanks to the confidence he had in me, I was permitted, as a senator, to give back in a small way what Canada had given to me.

While I owe him a personal debt — one I can never repay — I also know that Canadians themselves owe our eighteenth prime minister a great deal. Whether through his tireless efforts battling

apartheid and helping to free Nelson Mandela, his vision in achieving the Free Trade Agreement with the Americans that later expanded to NAFTA, his battles to rid our continent of acid rain, and, most important, his valiant attempts to bring Quebec into the Constitution with "honour and enthusiasm," he did the best that was in him.

I was proud to stand with Brian Mulroney in 1990 when I became a senator, and I am just as proud to stand with him today.

As I come to the close of my career here, I wish all senators well in the years ahead. I extend heartfelt thanks to our highly knowledgeable table officers, to the Usher of the Black Rod and to all Senate staff, Senate security personnel and committee clerks who perform their duties here in the Senate with such constant good humour and competence.

In particular, I wish to thank and pay tribute to my incomparable and irreplaceable executive assistant of over 21 years, Loren Cicchini. With considerable good humour, coupled with inexhaustible patience, skill and friendship, she has been crucial to any success that I may have achieved in this job. Heaven knows how I will survive on my own.

In my final words as a senator, I will not be quoting from Arthur Meighen. Instead, I will follow his example and turn to the words of his great and worthy opponent, Sir Wilfrid Laurier — a man he admired more than almost anyone he met through public service. Through the words of Laurier, Canada's first and greatest French Canadian Prime Minister, I wish to again offer my advice to my children and their generation:

I shall remind you that already many problems rise before you, problems of race division, problems of creed differences, problems of economic conflict, problems of national duty and national aspiration. Let me tell you that for the solution of these problems you have a safe guide, an unfailing light if you remember that faith is better than doubt and love is better than hate. Let your aim and purpose, in good report or ill, in victory or defeat, be so to live, so to strive, so to serve as to do your part to raise even higher the standard of life and living.

Finally, honourable senators, Laurier said the following:

Canada first, Canada last, Canada always.

May those words guide each and every one of you in the years ahead.

Merci.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, Kelly, the Meighen family, my old colleague Graham Scott and Gail Scott whom I see there in the gallery, I could get up today and speak for many a long hour about Michael Meighen but, in the name of our former colleague Senator Lowell Murray, I will keep my comments brief.

• (1450)

Honourable senators, I view Senator Meighen's decision to take an early departure from the Senate with very mixed emotions. I am very sorry to see him leave this place, but happy for him and his family that he will now have more time to pursue the many worthy causes — although he always had time in the past — and as well for some quality personal time.

As Senator Meighen mentioned, he made some very long-lasting friends in politics. I am one of those who had the privilege of meeting him almost 50 years ago — as Michael, Brian Mulroney, and people like Joe Clark and myself were all part of the then Young Progressive Conservative Association — and having all these wonderful meetings in Ottawa that would not now stand the test of political correctness. In any event, we have known each other for a very long time.

I for one — and I know I speak for others — am truly grateful. I have great respect for you, Michael, and I am truly grateful for all of your many valuable contributions, freely expressed opinions, commitment to your country, to Parliament and to the country in a much broader sense of all your philanthropic work.

Senator Meighen's decision to take leave of the Senate at this time is one that, although we wish it were not so, we fully respect. It is a vast understatement to say that he will be deeply missed by all honourable senators. Our side shall particularly miss his good and generous nature, his wisdom, and sound advice. I think it can be said about Michael more than anybody that I have ever met in politics, he is a true gentleman.

As a member of the Conservative caucus now, and for quite some time, Michael does have a long history in the party. He did run twice in his native Montreal in the general elections of 1972 and 1974. For a Conservative to run in Westmount in Montreal is quite a courageous act. Following that, he was elected president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and served in that capacity from 1974-77. Some of us remember that. One of the interesting things in the era of Michael's presidency was the leadership convention; a huge leadership convention at that point. It was the first leadership convention where there was a modern media and a lot of coverage. Michael oversaw all of this. We had a huge convention and multiple candidates in the midst of a February snowstorm, which of course was called when our dear former leader Robert Stanfield had decided to leave the leadership of the party. Of course the leadership in 1976 resulted in the election of the Right Honourable Joe Clark as leader.

Michael, I think this is something you do not mention enough, but it was the first national leadership convention by any political party to come into the modern era, especially in Canada. Your leadership of that event is something that you should be very proud of.

As well as Michael's political career, we all know and respect his career as a lawyer and a philanthropist. When honourable senators consider his contribution over 20 years in this chamber — and especially in committees — the service is exemplary, to say the least. His commitment to our men and women in uniform and our veterans is deep and unwavering, as

I mentioned a moment ago. Michael, even though you are not here I know that because of your efforts they will have a voice no matter what you do in the future.

Michael has challenged Canadians to place greater value, as he said in his very eloquent remarks, on learning more about the history of this great country. Senator Meighen, as we all know, has carried on with the legacy of the Meighen family throughout his parliamentary career. Even though he is the grandson of our great former Conservative Prime Minister Sir Arthur Meighen, Michael is his own man, has made his own mark and will be known as another great Meighen in the annals of the history of our Parliament.

Michael, as you know, I was truly hopeful that we could have resolved the Bomber Command issue before you left this place. I would have thought that would have been a fitting tribute in your honour. We will keep trying Michael, even though you are not here to press us on almost a daily basis. I am hopeful that when we do succeed in this area that we will really call it the Meighen initiative.

Honourable senators, I join with all of you and all of the members of the conservative caucus in wishing Michael and Kelly and their families, their sons Ted, Hugh and Max all of the very best. I am delighted they are in the gallery today to witness the departure of our dear colleague. Your gain is our loss. Thank you very much.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to add my voice to that of Senator LeBreton in paying tribute to our friend, Senator Meighen, for his lifetime of service to this country and to say how much we will miss him here.

In Canada we do not have many family dynasties in politics, certainly not ones that trace their roots back more than a century. Senator Meighen is one of those rare exceptions, coming from one of Canada's great political families. His grandfather, of course, was the Right Honourable Sir Arthur Meighen, first elected to the other place in 1908, subsequently serving twice as Canada's Prime Minister and who sat in this chamber for more than 10 years. He was the only person, as Michael said a moment ago, ever to have served as Leader of the Government and Leader of the Opposition in both houses.

Prime Minister's Meighen's legacy is well known; the creation of the Canadian National Railway, his prominent role in ending the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 and the list goes on.

However Sir Arthur Meighen left another legacy for Canadians: the values of public service, political involvement, and fundamental rock solid respect for others that he instilled in his family, and which we have been privileged to witness in his grandson, our colleague, Senator Michael Meighen.

Senator Meighen has been a leader in his community, in his profession and his political party, supporting our great cultural institutions — he and his wife Kelly have been extraordinary benefactors of the Stratford Festival — to serving some of our

institutions of higher education. He served on the Board of Governors of his alma mater McGill University and is Chancellor to the University of King's College in my own home town of Halifax. Supporting community organizations in Atlantic Canada and throughout the rest of the country, Senator Meighen has never stopped working, quite simply, to make Canada a better place. I thought an article which appeared in the *McGill Reporter* a few years ago captured Senator Meighen quite accurately. The journalist wrote:

... after just a few minutes with Meighen it becomes evidence his is more than just the practiced warmth of a seasoned politician — Meighen likes people, pure and simple. Intelligent, forthright, self-deprecating and quick to laugh, Meighen quickly turns the 30-minute formal interview into a casual conversation.

She described his passion for and commitment to McGill adding:

And it is a passion.

I think all of us here can attest to that, and that his compassion and commitment has not been limited to McGill. Senator Meighen has worked tirelessly as a highly respected chair, deputy chair and member of a number of our standing committees, notably the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, and that committee's Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs.

Until just a few years ago, Senator Meighen served as counsel to the well known law firm of Ogilvy Renault — formerly Meighen Demers — and applied his legal skills directly to public service and his legal counsel to the groundbreaking Deschênes Commission on war criminals in the 1980s.

Senator Meighen has also been active in conservation efforts. He helped create the Meighen-Molson Professorship in Atlantic Salmon Research, which led to the establishment of the acclaimed Canadian Rivers Institute at the University of New Brunswick. He serves as Canadian Chair of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, whose work he spoke about in this chamber the other day.

• (1500)

I must tell you, honourable senators, that as a Liberal I took great comfort in his speech. I could not help feeling some affinity for the endangered wild Atlantic salmon he spoke about. However, I was greatly encouraged by the optimism about their future — that, as a result of hard work and education, the wild salmon are being returned to their historic greatness in this country.

In Senator Meighen's words, the salmon "like other iconic animals or natural wonders that have come to represent Canada's distinctiveness, history and heritage" — again, colleagues, I feel a certain resonance in his words — are beginning to enjoy a resurgence. He pointed out that governments can play a vital role in achieving conservation.

Honourable senators, I must tell you that as Liberals we too are finding that the actions and inactions of this government are playing a vital role, and we appreciate the work that the government is doing in establishing the conditions that will lead to our own resurgence.

I know Senator Meighen understands the dedication of those of us on this side to a strong Liberal Party of Canada. He understands that because an essential part of his public service has been his dedication to his political party.

Corry and Hodgetts, in their classic text on democratic government and politics, wrote that "There is ample reason for suspecting that political parties are somehow essential to the working of democratic government." I agree with that, and I would go further and say that the best and healthiest democratic governments owe their well-being to the involvement and commitment of people like Senator Meighen.

Honourable senators, it is easy when times are good to find people to assume positions of leadership in a political party. It is not so easy when times are tough. Senator Meighen was there for his party through some very difficult times — as a candidate, as a party president and, of course, here in the Senate.

Despite, or perhaps because of, that deep commitment to his chosen party, Senator Meighen has always understood the equally deep commitment of those across the aisle and has forged true friendships that cross political boundaries. That, again, may perhaps be traced back to his legacy from his grandfather. Last November, Senator Meighen wrote an op-ed for the *National Post*, dedicated in honour of the memory of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He wrote:

Some might ask why I, a life-long and very proud Conservative, would encourage Canadians to take time out this week to honour Laurier, who, after all, was Canada's greatest Liberal prime minister. In this, I take my lead from my grandfather Arthur Meighen, an opponent of Laurier's who sat across from him in Parliament for more than a decade.

At the time of Sir Wilfrid's death in 1919, my grandfather, a member of Sir Robert Borden's cabinet, took my aunt Lillian, then only nine-years-old, with him when he paid his respects to Lady Laurier.

"You're too young to understand," he said to her, "but I want you to be able to say that you saw one of the finest men I have ever known."

Honourable senators, I believe that kind of respect between political adversaries expressed by both the Right Honourable Arthur Meighen in 1919 and by Senator Michael Meighen a few months ago represents the best of Canadian politics. I am convinced that respect has contributed to making Canada the great nation that it is today, and it must be part of our collective DNA if we are to achieve our true potential as a nation.

Senator Meighen, I do not know how many Canadians take the time to think about the qualities that a good Canadian senator should possess — probably not many — but I believe that if they did they would come up with a list that is remarkably summed up in you. Dedication to your community, to your party and to your country — these are the qualities for which you have the admiration of us all.

It has been an honour to serve in this chamber with you. My best wishes to you and to Kelly, and to the members of your family, for the next stage of your life together.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Carignan, debate adjourned.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Nancy Greene Raine, pursuant to notice of January 31, 2012, moved:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;
- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;
- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and

(g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products.

She said: Honourable senators, in the interests of ensuring a vibrant maple syrup industry in our country, it is with great pleasure that I tabled a motion that calls on the government to amend the Maple Products Regulations.

On podiums around the world, the maple leaf — emblazoned proudly on our national flag — says “Canada” more than any other image. On kitchen tables around the world, maple syrup has become equally symbolic of our nation, for while other countries produce maple syrup, no one produces more than Canada.

Honourable senators, I have a confession to make: I love maple syrup. When I was ski racing we would often be in Quebec during the sugaring off season. I remember the experience of visiting a sugar shack and tasting maple taffy for the first time. I could see then, and still appreciate, the work it takes to produce real maple syrup.

What many people may not realize is that maple syrup is not only an iconic Canadian food, it is also a healthy food choice. Last March the American Chemical Society released a study done by the University of Rhode Island that identified 54 compounds in maple syrup from Canada, many with antioxidant activity and potential health benefits. The study indicated that these compounds may pack similar health benefits to those found in berries, tea, red wine and flaxseed.

Dr. Navindra Seeram, an assistant pharmacy professor at the university stated:

Not all sweeteners are created equal. When choosing a sweetener, pure maple syrup may be a better choice because of the range of antioxidant compounds not found in other sweeteners.

Considering all the benefits, however, our maple syrup industry should be even stronger. That is exactly what the proposed amendments are all about. Let me reflect on the challenges of the industry, and why changes to regulations are required.

Every year, depending on the weather and other factors, the North American maple syrup industry generates about \$400 million in sales. Canada produces a staggering 82 per cent of global output for maple products. In 2009 alone, we produced more than four and a half times as much maple syrup as the United States, which is the only other country to produce it.

While these figures are impressive, there is a huge capacity for future growth. Currently, pure maple syrup represents less than 1 per cent of the market share of common sweetener sales in North America. In order to penetrate this lucrative market, the merits of maple syrup must be effectively sold.

Our industry knows that its success depends on close collaboration with counterparts in the U.S. to ensure the integrity of our common products. That is why, in 1975, North American producers founded the International Maple Syrup Institute.

[Translation]

Today, the International Maple Syrup Institute is focusing its efforts on maintaining the integrity of pure maple syrup and developing industry standards. In this way it will ensure that Canada and the United States continue to enjoy the social, economic and environmental benefits of the maple syrup industry in the long term.

• (1510)

That is why the institute has conducted extensive consultations with industry managers and consumers in recent years and has identified a number of serious problems.

[English]

First, there is no uniform definition of “pure maple syrup.” As a result, it is difficult for the industry to win the hearts of consumers who may continue to buy artificial sweeteners. Second, as honourable senators may well know, when consumers reach for a can or bottle of maple syrup, they face a confusing patchwork of grading systems. In the U.S. darker syrups are labelled “Grade B,” while in Canada, they have labels such as “Amber No. 2” or “Amber No. 3.” This has created a host of problems.

[Translation]

Consumers must first distinguish between Canadian and U.S. grades of dark maple syrup. They have to consider a set of letters, numbers and colours in order to determine as best they can the taste of the maple syrup. Consumers may falsely believe that a grade B is inferior to a category No. 2. That is not the case; it is just a matter of taste.

[English]

Other challenges include the presence of off-flavoured or defective maple syrups in retail markets, which can hurt the reputation of the maple syrup industry. In addition, consumers have expressed a desire to know where their products are coming from. At present, there are no laws that require a producer to indicate the province, state or country of origin.

The International Maple Syrup Institute has come up with a plan to deal with these issues. First, it has proposed a uniform definition of “pure maple syrup.” Second, it has proposed that all pure maple syrup sold in retail markets be labelled “Grade A Maple Syrup.” Four distinct classes would describe colour and taste, such as “golden colour and delicate taste,” or “dark colour and robust taste.” Maple syrup that does not meet these requirements would not be permitted for sale in retail markets. These products would be known as “processing grade maple syrup” and, as such, would only be available for food processing. In this way, the industry can preserve the integrity of its products in the eyes of consumers. The institute also wants to see a requirement for product labels to include province, state or country of origin.

Honourable senators, the benefits of these proposed changes are manifold for consumers, industry and government alike. For consumers, a uniform definition of “pure maple syrup” would

distinguish the product from other natural and artificial sweeteners in North America and around the world. The new grade A standard for all pure maple syrup would end the confusion about the quality of darker syrups. The four different classes of maple syrup would make it easier for consumers to choose their preference because it is easy to understand the difference between golden delicate taste and dark robust taste. The removal of off-flavoured product from the shelves would strengthen consumer confidence in the purity of the maple syrup they purchase.

[Translation]

For the industry, a standardized grading and classification system would help to distinguish pure maple syrup from other competing sweeteners and to eliminate any prejudices about dark maple syrups. These changes would help the industry open markets and lower trade barriers within and between states and provinces, and, indeed, all over the world.

[English]

For government, the streamlining of maple product labelling and sales regulations would cut red tape and reduce duplication. Having a single grade would also make it easier for governments in Canada and the U.S. to enforce a standard of purity while improving coordination. Of course, as with any change, there would be short-term costs. However, the long-term benefits of expanding markets will far outweigh these initial expenses.

For these changes to occur, all existing maple regulations need to be upgraded and modernized in both Canada and the U.S. In our country, this would affect regulations administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In advance of changes, the International Maple Syrup Institute is planning several market trials of the new standards in Canada and in the U.S. this year. Feedback from maple producers, packers and consumers will identify where the industry needs to focus its communication efforts. Ultimately, these trials should ease the transition to standard grades.

Honourable senators, the maple syrup industry is poised to expand its market share, but it can only do so with a more streamlined approach to grading and nomenclature in North America. The Government of Canada is just one piece of the puzzle, and it is vital that we step up and do our share to support the maple syrup industry. The institute is encouraging other jurisdictions to make the relevant changes to their laws and regulations for the benefit of consumers, producers and governments.

Honourable senators, the International Maple Syrup Institute has worked long and hard to prepare for these changes to their industry. It would like to see the new grades in place by this time next year. I believe it is in the interest of all to help make this happen. I urge honourable senators to support the motion before the house today.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Would the honourable senator take a question?

[Senator Raine]

Senator Raine: Yes.

Senator Mercer: This is an important industry in Canada, in particular in my province of Nova Scotia and other eastern Canadian provinces. Could the honourable senator tell us what effect she thinks global warming is having on the production of maple syrup?

Senator Angus: There is no such thing.

Senator Raine: I understand that the warming comes and goes. The interesting thing about maple syrup is that it comes from a unique area. Some people wonder why I have put forth this motion, but I can tell you, we have a lot of maple syrup in British Columbia. It is in our pantries, our fridges and our stores; and it is on our ice cream and our cereal. Maple syrup is truly unique and it takes a certain climate to produce it, and Ontario has had a very warm winter this year.

One thing has impressed me about the maple syrup producers: they follow the climate closely and maple syrup production is greater some years than other years. I am sure that has to do with the weather, not the climate; and they are prepared for that. I hope that I have answered the question.

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: I have listened carefully to the facts that Senator Raine brought forward in respect of her motion. New Brunswick has many sugar bushes and syrup producers, as have Quebec and some portions of northern Ontario. My question is: Are producers in these provinces members of the International Maple Syrup Institute? Do they agree with this motion?

Senator Raine: I thank the honourable senator for the question. It is an excellent opportunity for me to address the regulatory proposal to standardize the grades and nomenclature for pure maple syrup in North America and the world marketplace, which has been submitted to all federal, state and provincial agencies with regard to maple product sales.

The institute came together about 15 years ago and has worked for a long time on many common interests of the industry. In Canada, members include the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Nova Scotia, the New Brunswick Maple Syrup Association, and Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative, in Quebec. Some members are individual producers and some of them are organizations of the provincial producers. They have all worked on this initiative and are unanimous in their support of it. It is interesting that the Americans have worked closely on this area as well, and bills are being introduced in some American state legislatures. This is a very good example of how the industry on both sides of the border and made up of like-minded people can come together and do something that takes the border out of the equation.

• (1520)

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, it would be unfortunate if a Quebecer did not speak about such a motion. I would like to draw attention to the fact that this was a tradition that existed long before the arrival of the Europeans.

It was the first inhabitants of Canada who developed this unique method of extracting maple sap, a product that is so appreciated by epicures, and doing so at a very specific time of year.

As a Quebec senator, I recognize Quebec's importance to the maple syrup industry in Canada. Not only is Quebec the largest producer of maple syrup in North America but it is also a driving force in strengthening the industry as a whole.

Quebec played a key role in developing the new standards proposed in this motion, and my colleague, Senator Raine, has referred to them. In order to put this motion in a broader context, I would like to talk about what the industry means to the Quebec economy and about the tremendous amount of work that the province has done to ensure that Quebecers and all Canadians continue to benefit from this industry. By so doing, I hope that all senators will understand why it is so important to support this motion.

The most recent figures on the world's production of pure maple syrup clearly illustrate the key role played by Quebec. In 2009, the United States produced some 2.3 million U.S. gallons of maple syrup from 8.6 million taps. Canada produced nearly 11 million U.S. gallons from 50 million taps.

In other words, Canada produced four and a half times more maple syrup than the United States. Think about it. In 2009, Canada was responsible for 82 per cent of the world's pure maple syrup production, which represents \$353 million. Quebec alone generated almost \$305 million of this production.

In 2009, Quebec was responsible for nearly 71 per cent of all of the world's maple syrup production. This is a remarkable achievement that can be attributed to the devotion and expertise of over 13,000 maple syrup producers in Quebec.

That being said, the commitment of Quebec maple syrup producers is not limited to sugar shacks. For a long time, Quebec producers have recognized the need to work with other maple syrup producers in Canada and in the United States, which is the main importer of maple syrup.

Simply put, the main competition for Quebec's maple syrup industry does not come from other producers. It comes instead from the range of less expensive natural and artificial sweeteners available in the marketplace.

Thus, Quebec has worked hard to help strengthen the market position of the maple syrup industry in Canada, North America and around the world. In the beginning a meeting in Montreal in 1974 led to the creation of the International Maple Syrup Institute, a non-profit organization made up of Canadian and American members.

Over the past few years, the institute has developed a uniform definition of pure maple syrup, as well as new standards and nomenclature. The motion before us, of course, is based on the institute's fine work. The proposed changes to maple syrup standards reflect extensive consultations with industry and consumers.

To produce its consumer research report, the institute teamed up with the Federation of Quebec Maple Producers and the

Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative. It is in that context that I move the adjournment of the debate in my name. I will use the rest of my time to propose a few amendments to Senator Raine's motion.

I spoke to her about it. There are a few little mistakes in the French version, which have nothing to do with the quality of the text. I consulted representatives from Citadelle and other producers. I wanted to be sure that the French version reflected the fact that Quebec is the heart of this industry and that Quebec's interests are crucial.

I will continue the debate next week and propose amendments to the motion.

(On motion of Senator Nolin, debate adjourned.)

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before I call upon Senator Carignan to move the adjournment motion, I wish to invite all honourable senators to drop by the Speaker's quarters to meet the family of our colleague Senator Meighen.

Second, we will convene on Tuesday, February 7 at 2 p.m., but before prayers are read, it has been agreed by the leaders on both sides that the Diamond Jubilee Medal that has been specially struck will be available for distribution to all honourable senators and we can do that here.

Also, it is on that day, in the morning, that we, as our Senate Diamond Jubilee project, will be formally dedicating the stained glass window.

[Translation]

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Leave having been given to revert to Government Notices of Motions:

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), I move:

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 2 p.m.)

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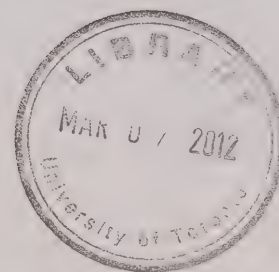
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Tuesday, February 7, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

The Senate met at 2:20 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, yesterday marked a special anniversary in the history of our nation. In all parts of the country, Canadians have begun celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as Queen of Canada, a role she took over 60 years ago when she ascended to the Throne. Millions around the world will be joining in these celebrations.

Throughout her life, the Queen has been a model of public service and dedication to the world. Her sense of duty, commitment and service to others has been an inspiration to citizens of the world to give back to those around them and to work towards a better society. She has brought stability in turbulent times, not only in the countries of the Commonwealth but throughout the broader international community.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee is more than an occasion to mark the many years of service by Her Majesty. These celebrations also give us an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of Canada and of Canadians over the last 60 years. Diamond Jubilee medals will be presented to 60,000 Canadians to recognize the contributions they have made to their communities and their tireless efforts in making Canada a better place here at home or by bringing credit to our country abroad. To these distinguished Canadians, I offer a heartfelt "thank you" and congratulations.

This morning, in the presence of the Governor General, we dedicated the magnificent Diamond Jubilee stained glass window over the entrance to this building. During her 2002 Golden Jubilee Tour of Canada, Her Majesty said this:

It is a privilege to serve you as Queen of Canada to the best of my ability, to play my part in the Canadian identity, to uphold Canadian traditions and heritage, to recognize Canadian excellence and achievement, and to seek to give a sense of continuity in these exciting, ever-changing times in which we are fortunate enough to live.

As the year progresses, honourable senators, Canadians from coast to coast to coast will mark in their own way this important milestone in Her Majesty's public life. I look forward to celebrating

with them Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 60 years as Queen of Canada and to congratulate her and to thank her for her dedication and service to Canada. Vive la Reine!

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize the Golden Jubilee of the Canadian Coast Guard as we marked this past month the fiftieth anniversary of this historic institution.

The Canadian Coast Guard is playing an integral role in safeguarding our Canadian waters. Operating within Canada's waterways and oceans, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and north to the frozen waters of our Arctic, the Coast Guard remains a true symbol of our nation's security and sovereignty.

Created on January 26, 1962, by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, the Canadian Coast Guard has grown into an organization that now employs roughly 4,500 Canadians and operates a fleet of 116 vessels and 22 helicopters.

We have asked the men and women, both past and present, of the Canadian Coast Guard to safeguard Canada's oceans and waterways. Given the immensity of our coastline, this task is a challenging mandate. It is, however, a challenge that these men and women have executed with impeccable skill and integrity for 50 years, including people such as my own brother Allister, who served for many years, and my late Uncle Sam and late Uncle Charlie, both of whom were captains in the Coast Guard.

With the celebration of the Golden Jubilee, it is essential not only to commemorate and honour the past but also to consider the future. The Government of Canada has, since 2005, committed \$1.4 billion to the Canadian Coast Guard — funds that will ensure the Coast Guard fleet is adequately outfitted with new and highly capable vessels, such as the new Hero-class mid-shore patrol vessels currently being built in Halifax, and the construction of the polar icebreaker CCGS *John G. Diefenbaker*, set to become the new flagship of the Canadian Coast Guard.

It is with this funding that our government has and will continue to invest in the future of this distinguished organization. Certainly, with the celebration of our Coast Guard's historic anniversary, there is perhaps no better time to set the stage for the future.

Honourable senators, we, as Canadians, take great pride in this land we call home, and we take great pride in the safety and security that we are so fortunate to have. It is for this reason that I rise today to recognize the Golden Jubilee of our Canadian Coast Guard and to thank the men and women who have served and who continue to serve in safeguarding our waters.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

CULINARY INDUSTRY

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise today to share with you some exceptional news from my home province of Prince Edward Island. Last week, one of the most well-known restaurant review websites, Zagat, named Prince Edward Island on a list of the top eight food getaways in the world.

The article states:

Prince Edward Island is a shellfish junkie's dream. Just imagine . . . lobsters caught a few miles from your table, PEI oysters shucked within arm's reach of their beds, instead of being trucked down in the bed of an eight-wheeler. For the more adventurous foodie, go clam-digging or learn to shuck oysters, then sit back and sip on some local vino.

This is proud news for Islanders, who have always known that we are fortunate to live in such a wonderful place. We are truly blessed with seafood beyond compare and agricultural products that are known far and wide. We have world class chefs and fantastic restaurants. Visitors and Islanders alike can indulge in great-tasting meals served by friendly staff in a great location — all part of the unique experience that Prince Edward Island has to offer.

I encourage everyone to visit our Island and to share in the experience for themselves.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Don Meredith: Honourable senators, Black History Month provides Canadians and African-Canadians with an opportunity to explore the historical contributions that Black people have made to Canadian society.

On February 14, 2008, our colleague Senator Donald Oliver introduced a motion to have the Senate recognize February as Black History Month. This motion was carried unanimously and was adopted on March 4, 2008. At second reading, Senator Oliver said:

. . . this month-long celebration encourages us to honour the significant role that Black people, both past and present, have played in shaping the mosaic of Canada and its values.

• (1430)

Prior to this, in December 1995, the House of Commons officially recognized February as Black History Month, following a motion introduced by the first black Canadian woman elected to Parliament, the Honourable Jean Augustine. The motion was also carried unanimously by the House of Commons.

While in Parliament, Jean Augustine served as parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister from 1994 to 1996, and also served as the Minister of State for Multiculturalism, as well as for the Status of Women.

Jean Augustine not only serves as an example of a woman of colour, but also, as an immigrant from the island of Grenada, she serves as an example to immigrants of all ethnicities that with hard work and dedication you can achieve great success in this country.

I would also like to remember the contributions of the Honourable Lincoln Alexander, the first black man to be elected to Parliament. Mr. Alexander also served as the twenty-fourth lieutenant governor of my home province, Ontario, from 1985 to 1991. He became only the second black person to serve in this vice-regal position in Canada. In this capacity he was a strong advocate on youth issues and education.

Jean Augustine and Lincoln Alexander are examples of outstanding African-Canadians and trailblazers who have inspired Black people at all levels of government, including myself, to serve their city, their province and their country.

This Black History Month is especially dear to me as I was asked to emcee the national launch of Black History Month on February 1 at the Canadian War Museum. I would like to thank Minister Jason Kenney and his team at the Department of Citizenship and Immigration for hosting a highly educational and impactful event, which used drama and music to tell our story.

Deepak Chopra, CEO of Canada Post, unveiled this year's official Black History Month stamps telling the stories of Ms. Viola Desmond, who was wrongfully jailed for sitting in the Whites-only section of the Roseland Theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, in 1946, and Mr. John Ware, a cowboy and rancher, who would help to establish the ranching industry in what would eventually become Alberta.

That night impacted me personally, as it also marked the one-year anniversary of my swearing in to this place. As you know, I am only the fourth African-Canadian and the first Jamaican to have this honour.

As our government celebrates the 200-year anniversary of the War of 1812 this year, Black History Month has a particular focus on Black people like former American slave Richard Pierpoint and his fellow soldiers in the all-Black company who helped to defend this country on the battlefield.

Please join me, honourable senators, in celebrating the contributions of the Honourable Jean Augustine and the Honourable Lincoln Alexander and in thanking all government departments, agencies and Crown corporations, including the Canadian War Museum, Canada Post, and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, for helping to tell this important part of Canada's history.

[Translation]

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL THOMAS MCGRATH

CONGRATULATIONS ON GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Hon. George Furey: Honourable senators, today I rise to salute Thomas McGrath, who was awarded the Governor General's Meritorious Service Medal.

[English]

Honourable senators, I wish to express my gratitude to Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas McGrath for his countless hours of service to the Armed Forces, to the young men and women of Newfoundland and Labrador and to his community.

A vice-principal at Gonzaga High School in St. John's, Lieutenant-Colonel McGrath is a national award winning educator and a recipient of the National Hilroy Fellowship, which recognizes exceptional curriculum and teaching innovation. As well, experiential learning programs he designed have twice won national awards from the Conference Board of Canada.

Lieutenant-Colonel McGrath began his career as a cadet instructor in 1977. Since that time, thousands of young men and women and officers have benefited from his dedication and service. He has championed many initiatives for cadets and officers, including cadet involvement in biathlon and the Duke of Edinburgh Award program. He is also a founding member of Cadets Caring For Canada, which encourages cadets to help their communities.

Over his career, Lieutenant-Colonel McGrath has received numerous other distinctions, including being appointed an officer of the Order of Military Merit and being awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada Medal, the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal, the Canadian Forces' Decoration, a Maritime Commanders' Commendation and a Commander, Maritime Forces Atlantic Commendation.

This current honour, bestowed by the Governor General, recognizes a military deed or activity performed in a highly professional manner and according to a very high standard that brings benefit and honour to the Canadian Forces. As such, it is only individuals of the highest calibre who receive this honour, and Lieutenant-Colonel McGrath is such an individual. I ask all honourable senators to join me in congratulating Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas McGrath and his wife, Keli Jo, on this well deserved honour.

THE LATE CLAUDE EMERY

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, in early January, the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans lost its long time Library of Parliament analyst, Claude Emery. His sudden death at age 53 was a shock to us all. We will miss Claude's deep knowledge, insightful analysis and friendly demeanour. He was not only an incredibly talented and dedicated researcher and writer, but also a genuine gentleman.

It was an absolute pleasure working with Claude. I think he exemplified the best of the Library of Parliament Research Branch. He was professional, non-partisan, passionate about his work and committed to his job. He knew his material inside and out and could recall, with detail and precision, facts from committee studies decades earlier. He was a valued asset to the

Fisheries and Oceans Committee and will be greatly missed by all of us. To his friends, family and co-workers, I offer my heartfelt condolences.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, I rise to pay tribute to Queen Elizabeth on the sixtieth anniversary of her reign. I actually recall that day very well. I was 10 years old, and our family was driving from Toronto to Montreal to visit relatives. We had the CBC on the entire time. It was on the old Highway 2, and there were many live reports from London. There was funeral music as well as great classical music and different tributes. I remember working hard when we got out of the range of the Toronto CBC station to find the Montreal one, but I did. I listened to every minute of it, and I will never forget it.

I recall the year before that, when she came on her first official visit as Princess Elizabeth with Prince Phillip. The Leafs, who were still in training, put on a special game for her at Maple Leaf Gardens. It was just a 20-minute show with the Chicago Blackhawks, but my Uncle Alex, who had been a major in the First World War, in the British Army, took me. I will never forget it.

Then, when they were driving past Cobourg, where we had a summer place for many years, they were in a convertible. There were about 50 people out at the road, at the intersection that went down to the lake. Although they were all looking and waving at her, I knew she was waving at me. I knew. I was 10. I will never forget that.

I have been so lucky over the years, on at least half a dozen occasions, to sit at her table at dinners and lunches in both Canada and London. She was always so hospitable and so warm. I will not start in on the stories, but there are many.

Your Majesty, you have served Canada well for 60 years. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CERTIFICATE OF NOMINATION TABLED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the certificate of nomination of Anne-Marie Robinson as President of the Public Service Commission.

[Translation]

THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO RECEIVE ANNE-MARIE ROBINSON, PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, AND THAT THE COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE SENATE NO LATER THAN ONE HOUR AFTER IT BEGINS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(i), I move:

That, at the end of Question Period and Delayed Answers on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission; and

That the Committee of the Whole report to the Senate no later than one hour after it begins.

• (1440)

[English]

PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF MOTION TO APPROVE APPOINTMENT

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, in accordance with Subsection 4.(5) of the *Public Service Employment Act*, S.C. 2003, c. 22, ss. 12, 13, the Senate approve the appointment of Anne-Marie Robinson as President of the Public Service Commission.

OVERSEAS TAX EVASION

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to:

- (a) the problem of Canadians evading taxes by hiding assets in overseas tax havens;
- (b) the harm this does to Canada, both in terms of lost revenue and its effect on those Canadians who obey the law and pay their fair share of taxes;

(c) the pathetic efforts of the Canada Revenue Agency to discover, halt and defer overseas tax evasion, and how, in comparison to those similar agencies in other countries, CRA falls short;

(d) the fact that this, plus recent scandals involving the CRA could lead one to conclude that there are serious problems at the Agency; and

(e) concerns that this situation amounts to a lack of leadership on the part of the Government of Canada.

QUESTION PERIOD

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

ACCESS TO SERVICE CANADA

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Last fall, the government announced that it was closing the only Employment Insurance processing facility on Prince Edward Island, eliminating 30 jobs there. According to the latest figures released by Statistics Canada, P.E.I. has the highest unemployment to job vacancy rate in Canada. This means that P.E.I. has the toughest job market in the country. Why, at a time when Islanders are finding it so difficult to find work, would the government choose to eliminate 30 well paying jobs?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank the honourable senator for the question. I have answered similar questions before. As the honourable senator knows, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada is modernizing its outdated paper-based systems of Employment Insurance accessibility and service to deliver EI properly to all Canadians. The government realizes that there is some work still to be done but the object of the exercise is to modernize the EI system so that it is electronically driven rather than paper-based.

Senator Hubley: Why would the government close the Montague processing centre when there is a backlog of EI claims in P.E.I. and in Atlantic Canada? Following the difficult and unacceptable delays experienced by Islanders over the Christmas holidays, I heard a couple of weeks ago that the P.E.I. processing centre was so busy that employees were working unpaid overtime hours and new employees had to be hired just to cope.

How can the government guarantee residents of P.E.I. that they will still receive their Employment Insurance benefits on time when it is planning to close such a busy processing centre?

Senator LeBreton: I thank the honourable senator for the question. The government wants to streamline the process and move away from a paper-based system. It is interesting that the honourable senator should ask this question because, if my memory serves me correctly, a detailed answer was tabled last fall in respect of the closure in Montague.

INDUSTRY

CLOSURE OF ELECTRO-MOTIVE CANADA FACTORY

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, last week we learned that Caterpillar Inc. had ceased operations at its Electro-Motive Canada plant in London, Ontario, eliminating the jobs of about 450 people and affecting some 1,700 people in spinoff jobs or local community service jobs.

Tammy, the spouse of an employee who worked at the plant for seven years, said:

The last five weeks have been extremely stressful to our family. We are a family of five and adjusting to \$200 a week is not easy. That won't even pay our rent for one month. Luckily, we have been able to put a few bills on hold for a month and try to pay what we can on the remainder. My heart goes out to all the families that will lose their jobs at the closure of the plant. It is sad to see a company that has been in Canada for 63 years go down because the government would not step in and say enough is enough.

Honourable senators, this same factory served as a site for the Prime Minister in a photo-op to tout a \$5-million federal tax break for buyers of locomotive products in the 2008 federal budget. However, look where it is now. Given that investment, why did the government not obtain assurances that the company and the jobs would stay in Canada after it provided that financial incentive?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): As has been reported and as the honourable senator knows well, the Prime Minister's appearance was not in respect of that particular manufacturing site but in respect of the tax incentives for Canadian-built locomotives.

We are disappointed by the decision to close Electro-Motive Canada in London. In answer to the honourable senator's question about Canadian interests, I point out that Caterpillar Inc. is an American company that was sold to Americans, so it falls beyond the purview of Canadian foreign protection.

We are very concerned about the job losses in London, Ontario. Any manufacturing facility that closes is not good news. However, we will continue to work hard as a government to create jobs and opportunities across the country. That is why we announced recently a contract with General Dynamics Canada that protected 2,200 jobs in the London, Ontario area.

Senator Eggleton: I hope that the next time the government provides incentives for a company it will take into account that the taxpayers' investment and intellectual property of that company should be protected so we can keep the jobs and the intellectual property in Canada.

Honourable senators, in the last year over 60 per cent of the jobs created in Canada have been in one province, Alberta. However, in many other parts of the country, the economic recovery is stalled. Last year, Montreal lost 36,000 jobs and Toronto lost 45,000 jobs, which pushed the unemployment rate in

those cities to over 9 per cent. In rural areas, such as the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, and in smaller cities like London, Ontario, people are losing jobs. Why is there not a more balanced pan-Canadian approach to saving and creating jobs?

Senator LeBreton: I thank the honourable senator for the question. The honourable senator talked about an American-owned company in London, Ontario, that has always been an American-owned company; and an American-owned company purchased it. With regard to the unemployment situation, anyone who loses their job is of great concern to the government. As the honourable senator correctly points out, many places across the country, not just Alberta, fall well below the average unemployment rate. Some areas have above average rates of unemployment but I can tell the honourable senator only that the government continues to focus on jobs and the economy.

• (1450)

All of us are working very hard. The Minister of Finance is consulting Canadians from all walks of life, in all industries, with regard to measures he can take in the budget in order to promote our agenda of jobs and the economy.

I can only suggest to the honourable senator that rather than my answering today, which I am not in a position to do, he simply wait for the budget.

[Translation]

FINANCE

CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. For the past few months, both English and French television stations have been airing recurrent ads for Canada's Economic Action Plan. These ads do not actually say anything; they just advertise the plan over and over.

Can the minister tell us exactly how much was budgeted for and spent on advertising Canada's Economic Action Plan?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, that is on the public record, but I will take the question as notice.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: Perhaps that money could be spent to create jobs.

An Hon. Senator: Hear, hear.

INDUSTRY

SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN COMPANIES

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: I have another question that relates to the economic situation of our companies. As the leader knows, Research In Motion is a strategic asset for Canada in the field of telecommunications. Currently, the company is going

through a rough time and its stock value has dramatically decreased in the past year. This situation has put the company at risk for a hostile takeover, with the potential consequence of losing thousands of high-paying jobs and millions worth of intellectual property, which happened in the case of Nortel. If we remember how much money Canadians spent on innovation with Nortel and other companies, nothing came back to the Canadian taxpayer.

What concrete measures will the government take to prevent the loss and destruction of a strategic Canadian asset by foreign acquisition?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, if the honourable senator had been paying attention, she would know that the Prime Minister actually made reference to RIM in the last few days with regard to ongoing efforts of the government. I will take the question as notice.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to a question raised by the Honourable Senator Eggleton on December 14, 2011, concerning awareness and education regarding sodium.

[English]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral questions asked by the Honourable Senator Jaffer on November 2, 2011, and December 16, 2011, concerning missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I also have the honour to table the answer to the oral question raised by the Honourable Senator Dallaire on September 28, 2011, concerning international war criminals.

HEALTH

SODIUM LEVELS IN FOOD

(Response to question raised by Hon. Art Eggleton on December 14, 2011)

Health Canada supports Canadians in making healthy food choices and adopting a balanced diet.

The Canadian health ministers met on November 24-25, 2011 to discuss various public health files, including sodium reduction. Ministers expressed their continued commitment to working together towards the goal of reducing the average Canadian sodium intake to 2300 mg/day by 2016. Work is underway in the federal Health Portfolio with provinces, territories, non-government organizations, and industry, in the following areas:

Awareness and Education - Health Canada is working with partners on a Healthy Eating Awareness and Education Campaign that will help Canadians understand the importance of reducing their intake of sodium within the context of healthy eating.

- Launched by Health Canada in October 2010, phase I focussed on the Nutrition Facts Education Campaign (NFEC). The campaign is a collaboration between Health Canada and Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC).
- Phase II focuses on Healthy Eating Awareness and Education and will promote healthy eating messages together with those specific to sodium reduction. Messages and tips for sodium reduction are already available on the Healthy Canadians website (www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/index-eng.php). This phase will also build on the Food Guide's principles of healthy eating and will include awareness and education activities to encourage consumer behaviour change.
- Phase III of the Campaign, planned for 2013-2014, will focus on healthy eating and healthy weights.

Research - There are research funding initiatives underway. Canadian Institutes of Health Research hosted a workshop in January 2010 on research priorities related to sodium reduction. Subsequently, they funded three projects through a first call for proposals and launched a second funding opportunity on sodium and health in June 2011.

Food Supply / Monitoring - Health Canada continues to work with industry to develop guidance on reducing sodium in processed foods so that a variety of choices are available to Canadians. The guidance will be based on a gradual and phased reduction approach which will help contribute to bringing sodium intakes closer to the goal of 2300 mg/day. Health Canada is working with its provincial partners and the foodservice industry to develop guidance for best practices in restaurants and foodservice establishments. Health Canada is also facilitating the exploration of options for a collaborative incentive-type program with industry and health NGOs.

In addition, Health Canada will be monitoring and reporting on the dietary sodium intakes of Canadians as a measure of progress towards the 2016 intake goal of 2300 mg/day. This will assist industry in using the guidance as a benchmark for sodium reduction, provide technical advice as needed, and provide links to research.

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

MISSING AND MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND GIRLS

(Response to questions raised by Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer on November 2 and December 16, 2011)

The British Columbia Missing Women Commission of Inquiry is a provincial inquiry struck under provincial legislation. As a result, decisions regarding funding for

participants fall under the jurisdiction of the Government of British Columbia.

The Government of Canada takes the issue of violence against women and girls very seriously. Aboriginal women and girls remain particularly vulnerable to violence and can face challenges in accessing the justice system. The Government of Canada will continue to work in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal people, and other stakeholders to develop more effective, appropriate, and collaborative solutions and responses to help ensure the safety of women in Canada. These solutions cut across many different sectors, including the justice system, public safety, policing, gender issues, women's rights and Aboriginal affairs.

As one example, on October 29, 2010, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, announced seven concrete steps the Government of Canada is taking to address the disturbingly high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and to make our communities safer - http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/nr-cp/2010/doc_32560.html. The specifics of the seven concrete steps are set out in the Background to that announcement - http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/nr-cp/2010/doc_32564.html, and related federal spending with regard to some of the root causes of higher risks of violence is canvassed in a second Background - http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/nr-cp/2010/doc_32565.html. As the news release and background indicate, four of the seven steps involve additional program funding, which is available to Aboriginal groups and communities through application to either the Department of Justice - <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pb-dgp/fund-fina/index.html> - or the Department of Public Safety <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/cor/ac/index-eng.aspx>.

The Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women Canada also announced at the same time a \$500,000 investment to the Native Women's Association of Canada's "From Evidence to Action" program. On February 25, 2011, the Minister made a further announcement of \$1,890,844 over three years to support NWAC's "From Evidence to Action II" program - <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/med/news-nouvelles/2011/0225-2-eng.html>.

[Translation]

JUSTICE

INTERNATIONAL WAR CRIMINALS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire on September 28, 2011)

The Government of Canada created the War Crimes Program in 1998. The Program is a partnership between the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Department of Justice Canada (Justice). The partners work together to provide a range of

complementary remedies to ensure that Canada is not a safe haven for perpetrators of human and international rights violations.

The Government of Canada funded the War Crimes Program on a permanent basis in the 2011 federal budget. The permanency of the Program demonstrates Canada's commitment to fighting impunity for war criminals and to keep them from seeking safe haven in its territory. All allegations of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity are investigated no matter from where the individuals hail. Remedies for implementing Canada's "no safe haven" policy depend on the facts of the individual case. Our investigations may lead to criminal proceedings under the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act or administrative proceedings under the Citizenship Act or the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

Criminal investigations and prosecution, widely seen as essential to international justice, are the most expensive and resource intensive options. Nevertheless, the ability to conduct criminal investigation and to prosecute is indeed still an important element of the War Crimes Program. In some cases, a criminal justice response is the most appropriate action and sends a strong message to Canadians and the international community that the Government of Canada does not tolerate impunity for war criminals or for persons who have committed war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity. In other cases, it may be more appropriate to initiate civil or immigration proceedings such as an action to revoke an individual's citizenship or refugee status which was fraudulently obtained. Therefore partners diligently seek the most timely and cost-effective remedies such as early detection and denial of entry into Canada.

There has been no change to Canada's policy in respect of non-refoulement. The Supreme Court of Canada has established the principle that, save in exceptional circumstances, individuals may not be removed or extradited to a substantial risk of torture or to face the death penalty. In this regard, prior to extradition, the Government of Canada regularly seeks assurances that the death penalty will not be imposed. Before deportation from Canada, persons who are not Canadian citizens can request a pre-removal risk assessment to examine the risk of returning to their home country based on new evidence not available at the Immigration and Refugee Board hearing. A pre-removal risk assessment is a thorough process that evaluates whether a person would face persecution, torture, risk to life or risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, if returned to his or her country of origin.

ANSWERS TO ORDER PAPER QUESTIONS TABLED

ENVIRONMENT—GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government) tabled the response to Question No. 27 on the Order Paper by the Honourable Senator Mitchell.

ENVIRONMENT—LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government) tabled the response to Question No. 29 on the Order Paper—by Senator Mitchell.

ENVIRONMENT—SCIENTIFIC STUDIES
OF HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government) tabled the response to Question No. 30 on the Order Paper—by Senator Mitchell.

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE—
RECRUITMENT OF AUDITORS GENERAL

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government) tabled the response to Question No. 33 on the Order Paper—by Senator Downe.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT
TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS
THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Raine, seconded by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;

- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;
- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and
- (g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products.

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, before I begin, I would like to move two amendments. Will I have another 15 minutes or do I have to stick to the time I have remaining?

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Nolin has 10 minutes.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Pierre Claude Nolin: Honourable senators, I move that the motion be amended as follows:

- 1. By replacing the words "which is poised for market growth" by the words "which wants to pursue its dynamic development"; and
- 2. By replacing paragraph (d) in the motion by the following:

"Modernizing and standardizing the grading of pure Maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade which would explain more clearly to the consumer the classification and the grading system;"

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is moved by the Honourable Senator Nolin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, that the motion be amended as follows:

One, by replacing the words "which is poised for market growth" by the words "which wants to pursue its dynamic development"; and

By replacing paragraph (d) in the motion by the following: "Modernizing and standardizing the grading of pure Maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade which would explain more clearly to the consumer the classification and the grading system;"

Honourable senators, Senator Nolin will continue in his time and we will anticipate an explication of his amendments.

[Translation]

Senator Nolin: Honourable senators, I would like to speak about the two amendments, which both consist of clarifications. I consulted with Senator Raine and she agrees with these two amendments.

First, rather than initiating the export phase, we want to maintain the export effort. Second, the original wording of the motion was much more negative while producers want a much more positive motion.

These consultations revealed a mixture of grading systems for maple syrup that is confusing and even sometimes misleading. The Institute is proposing a single grade with four classes that would simplify life for both consumers and government regulators.

What is more, standardization would help distinguish pure maple syrup from other products on the market, and thus boost the industry's visibility. Our country has been producing maple syrup for years, decades or centuries, and the industry is well-organized and ideally positioned for growth. After all, pure maple syrup represents less than one percent of the market share of common sweetener sales in North America.

• (1500)

Honourable senators, the proposed changes would create a single grade for pure maple syrup and a separate grade for off-flavoured or otherwise defective syrups.

Only pure maple syrup would be sold in retail markets, while defective syrups would be used by the food processing industry. In this way, the new standards would protect the integrity of the industry.

Government regulators would focus on keeping inferior syrups out of retail markets. To that end, they would ensure that "Grade A" maple syrup does not contain off-flavours and meets all food quality and safety requirements.

Regulators would ensure that pure maple syrup is labelled properly. The Institute is aware of the gap between the good intentions of the industry and the realities on the ground.

To meet the higher expectations of the new standards, producers and packers would need training on how to avoid off-flavours and other common defects.

Fortunately, the institute has been sponsoring a maple syrup grading school at the University of Maine for some years now. It expects to build on the school's success and offer additional training at provincial, state and federal levels.

I am proud to note that one of the institute's Quebec members, Centre ACER, may also be able to help in this regard. As honourable senators may know, Centre ACER is responsible for

grading all bulk syrup produced in Quebec. The centre's specialists classify syrup by colour and identify off-flavours and defects. As the new standards are implemented, the centre's grading expertise could be transferred to the broader maple industry throughout Canada and the United States.

Centre ACER is currently conducting research that may lead to the creation of affordable and practical tools for identifying off-flavours in syrup at the field level. Over the past few years, the institute has been raising awareness within the industry about the proposed changes. These efforts have clearly shown that the vast majority of producers and packers are supportive once they understand the rationale for the changes.

Even so, the institute recognizes the need for a transition period between the existing and the proposed grading systems. This would allow producers and packers to use labels in their inventory, to become familiar with the new syrup classification equipment, and to introduce their customers to the new maple grading system. As the industry moves toward standardized grading, there will be a learning curve.

Some Canadian and American producers may resist the proposals due to short-term costs. However, the short-term costs would not be exorbitant and would pale in comparison to the potential long-term benefits of standardization. These benefits promise to be substantial for consumers, industry and government alike.

For consumers, the changes would end the current confusion over Grades A and B, or numbers 1, 2 and 3. As maple syrup lovers here know, the grade is secondary, but it can be cumbersome and confusing. All pure maple syrup would become Grade A.

Furthermore, the introduction of four distinct classes of Grade A syrup with descriptive names would help consumers choose their preferred taste. New labels would also indicate the origin of the product.

For industry, standardized grades and nomenclature would not only mean improving service to clients, but these standards could also help expand market share.

A uniform definition of pure maple syrup would help distinguish it from table syrups and other sweeteners.

With effective marketing focused on the purity of its product, the industry could attract new customers, both in North America and abroad, which would reduce technical barriers to expanding trade.

Finally, for government, modernizing and standardizing maple regulations would reduce duplication among federal, provincial and state regulatory bodies. Standard grades and classes would, in effect, allow all parties to speak the same language. This would simplify the job of regulators, and ultimately improve the coordination of standards both in Canada and the U.S.

Honourable senators, developing and improving standards across many jurisdictions in North America requires a great deal of good will and cooperation. The maple industry has

worked hard to reach this point in the process. It is up to all governments now to play their part by considering the proposals carefully, weighing the pros and cons, and then acting in the best interests of all concerned.

For this to happen, the first step is for the Government of Canada to launch an informed debate on the subject. I believe the Senate should call upon the government to amend the Maple Products Regulations in accordance with recommendations from the International Maple Syrup Institute.

I urge you, honourable senators, to join me in supporting the motion as amended.

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, I listened with great interest to the speeches and comments about the motion. New Brunswick is certainly a small maple syrup producer compared to our neighbour, Quebec.

The intent of the motion is definitely valid. As Senator Nolin mentioned, the industry did not originate in Europe as our population did, and there has been ongoing evolution.

Canadians who do some travelling abroad will come to realize that people around the world appreciate this product that is unique to North America, and especially to Canada.

This motion will allow the industry to standardize the labelling and the quality of the product. This will probably remove from the market some products that call themselves maple syrup but are not considered the real thing by connoisseurs.

I believe that good Canadian maple syrup is just as world-renowned as good Canadian ice wine. I support the motion and the proposed amendment without hesitation.

(On motion of Senator Runciman, debate adjourned.)

• (1510)

[English]

POVERTY

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C., calling the attention of the Senate to the issue of poverty in Canada—an issue that is always current and continues to have devastating effects.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, this inquiry initiated by Senator Robichaud deals with the issue of poverty in Canada, something that this Senate knows a fair bit about having a report before it from the Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee just a couple of years ago on the matter after an extensive study of some two years. What that report found and what is still a reality to this day is that 10 per cent of Canada's population — more than all of the people in Newfoundland and

Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P.E.I. and Manitoba combined — remain in poverty. Among those people are hundreds of thousands of children, perhaps up to a million children, who are still living in poverty in this country. That is in spite of the fact that in 1989 the House of Commons said it wanted to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. We have double-digit child poverty in most parts of this country to this day. This is a disgraceful situation for a country this rich, honourable senators, and there is more that needs to be done on this.

The inquiry brings this matter to our attention and I would like to speak to it further on another occasion. Therefore I ask that this could now be adjourned for the balance of my time in my name.

(On motion of Senator Eggleton, debate adjourned.)

OLD AGE SECURITY

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck rose pursuant to notice of November 22, 2011:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the inequities of the Old Age Security Allowance for unattached, low-income seniors aged 60-64 years.

She said: Honourable senators, I introduced this inquiry to make senators aware of a very unfair situation that exists in the old age pension program.

The subject matter of this inquiry came to my attention by a 62-year-old woman living in my province who had to stop working for health reasons. Her employer did not have a pension plan. She was finding it very difficult to exist on the savings she had been able to accumulate plus the small cheque she was getting from CPP.

The question that she asked me was why her next door neighbour could receive the OAS allowance and she could not. The neighbour was also 62 and had a similar income that was very low. However, the neighbour happened to be married.

When I looked into this situation, I discovered there is a very unfair aspect to this allowance. I found that a person who is married or in a common law relationship can receive the OAS Allowance if they are 60 to 64, if they pass a low-income test, and if their spouse is getting Old Age pension as well as the supplement. Furthermore, if their spouse has passed away, the other partner, aged 60 to 64, can get the OAS Allowance for the Survivor.

The unfair part is that single, legally separated or divorced people of the same age are not eligible for this allowance.

The Old Age Security Allowance was introduced in 1975. In order to be eligible, a senior must be 60 to 64 and the spouse must receive the OAS pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Together they must be considered low income. The OAS Allowance can be worth up to a maximum of \$1,021.65 per month. More than 60,000 low-income seniors receive this benefit.

The other allowance is called the Allowance for the Survivor and it was introduced in 1985. It is designed to help widows and widowers aged 60 to 64 who have a low income. The current maximum Allowance for the Survivor monthly benefit is \$1,143.78 per month. Almost 30,000 surviving spouses receive this benefit.

I am happy that those two allowances are there because it means that many seniors can live in a more comfortable fashion. However, I am concerned that some seniors are left out, and they are the low-income, unmarried, divorced people, aged 60 to 64, who are not eligible to apply for the allowance.

Seniors often face serious hardships. In my home province, there are about 21,000 seniors over the age of 65. The Prince Edward Island Senior Citizens' Federation says that almost 40 per cent of them, more than 8,000 people, live on less than \$20,000 a year. In fact, the average income of these seniors is \$16,608.

Many studies show that unattached seniors, especially women, are the most likely to be poor. Yet, these people are not eligible for the OAS Allowance.

A national advocacy group for seniors, CARP, stated in its pre-budget submission last year that older women can and do face retirement with less income. The advocacy organization noted a number of reasons why this might be so. Their wages may be lower; women live longer than men and therefore may outlive their financial savings; and many women spend some of their working years providing informal caregiving services and are unable to build up adequate retirement income.

CARP recognizes the problem of poverty among senior women is greater because the OAS Allowance for people age 60 to 64 does not include individuals who are single, divorced or separated.

Other national organizations, including the Canadian Association of Social Workers, have advocated for expanding the OAS Allowance. They want it to go to all low-income persons age 60 to 64, and I agree with these organizations. This allowance should be equally distributed among Canadians.

Therefore, as I said, I agree with these organizations and I would urge the federal government to expand the criteria so that all low-income people aged 60 to 64 are treated fairly and that they can apply for the OAS Allowance.

(On motion of Senator Carignan, debate adjourned.)

LITERACY

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck rose pursuant to notice of November 23, 2011:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the importance of literacy, given that more than ever Canada requires increased knowledge and skills in order to maintain its global competitiveness and to increase its ability to respond to changing labour markets.

She said: Honourable senators, I see that Inquiry No. 22 is now at day 13. I certainly want to speak on this inquiry, but am still waiting for some up-to-date statistics. Therefore, I would like to adjourn this inquiry for the remainder of my time.

(On motion of Senator Callbeck, debate adjourned.)

• (1520)

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Linda Frum rose pursuant to notice of December 7, 2011:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to egregious human rights abuses in Iran, particularly the use of torture and the cruel and inhuman treatment of unlawfully incarcerated political prisoners.

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to condemn the Iranian regime's appalling abuse of human rights and to call for the immediate release of all of Iran's unlawfully held political prisoners.

There are currently three Canadians being held in Iran's notorious Evin Prison, a grotesquely cruel and inhumane chamber of horrors. Like so many other innocent victims of the Iranian regime, these men have been subjected to beatings, physical and psychological torture and the denial of medical treatment in jail. They have been denied the right to a free and fair trial, and their lives are in grave danger.

Of greatest urgency among them is Saeed Malekpour, a web expert who was arrested in 2008 shortly after his arrival from Canada to visit his terminally ill father. Mr. Malekpour, who developed a software program that allows users to upload photographs, was sentenced to death in October 2010 after being found guilty of desecrating and assaulting Islam. His death sentence was reinstated in November 2011, and he lives each day with the prospect of imminent execution.

There is also the case of Hossein Derakhshan, an Iranian Canadian blogger and journalist, who was arrested and transferred to Evin Prison in 2008. Mr. Derakhshan is credited with initiating Iran's blogging revolution. In 2010, he was sentenced to 19-and-a-half years in prison for exercising his right to free expression online. He has endured 10 months of solitary confinement and was beaten into making false confessions about ties to U.S. and Israeli intelligence services.

There is also the case of Hamid Ghassemi-Shall, an Iranian and Canadian citizen, who was arrested while visiting his dying mother in Iran in 2008. In 2009, the Iranian judiciary sentenced Mr. Ghassemi-Shall to death in a trial that lasted only a few minutes. He has endured 18 months of solitary confinement and has been subjected to physical and psychological torture on charges of alleged espionage.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has the distinction of holding the world's highest record for public hangings and executions, and they are second only to China in the total number of political

executions. These executions are typically carried out in an especially cruel and sadistic manner. Systematic arrests, lengthy imprisonments and torture are regular occurrences in Iran. Human rights activists and members of ethnic minority groups are among the regime's favourite targets.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn in the strongest of terms the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights, and I call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held Canadian political prisoners Saeed Malekpour, Hossein Derakhshan and Hamid Ghassemi-Shall.

Hon. Nicole Eaton: Honourable senators, today I stand to bring to your attention the prominent lawyer and human rights activist Nasrin Sotoudeh.

Nasrin Sotoudeh was born in 1963 to a middle-class Iranian family. She studied international law and passed the bar examination in 1995. Nasrin is married to Reza Khandan, to whom she refers as a "truly modern man." They have two young children.

In her career, Nasrin represented imprisoned Iranian opposition activists and politicians following the disputed June 2009 Iranian presidential elections, as well as prisoners who had been sentenced to death. Her clients have included noted journalist and head of Iran's banned opposition group, the Democratic Front.

Nasrin Sotoudeh was arrested in September 2010 on charges of spreading propaganda and conspiring to harm state security. Since then, she has spent long periods in solitary confinement in the notorious Evin Prison.

In January 2011, Iranian authorities sentenced Sotoudeh to 11 years in prison and barred her from practising law and from leaving the country for 20 years. Six months later, a branch of the Tehran Appeals Court reduced her sentence to 6 years in prison and the ban from practising law to 10 years. Despite never having committed a justifiable crime, Nasrin is still in prison. To make matters worse, Nasrin Sotoudeh has been denied visitors. Why? Because she refuses to wear the chador, stating that it is a violation of her rights. The chador, as you will probably know, is the long open cloak worn by Iranian women on top of their hijab. Even though last month the Iranian judiciary announced it is no longer mandatory to wear a chador, Nasrin is still not allowed to see her husband or her two young children.

She is a very accomplished woman. In 2008, she was awarded the Human Rights Prize by the International Committee for Human Rights. More recently, she was awarded the 2011 PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award. This award honours writers who have fought courageously in the face of adversity for the right of freedom of expression.

Last October, Nasrin Sotoudeh became the recipient of PEN Canada's Empty Chair Award for the 32nd International Festival of Authors. The Empty Chair Award is presented to writers not permitted to travel freely or to appear at literary festivals around the world.

She also received PEN Canada's One Humanity Award, given to a writer whose work transcends the boundaries of national divides and inspires connections across cultures. These are well-deserved awards to a truly inspirational woman.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Nasrin Sotoudeh. I hope someday to be able to meet her in person.

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, I too rise to draw to your attention the plight of award-winning Iranian journalist Dr. Ahmad Zeid-Abadi.

In June 2009, Dr. Zeid-Abadi was among dozens of journalists arrested after Iran's disputed presidential elections. That December, he was sentenced in camera to six years in prison, five years internal exile and a "lifetime deprivation of any political activity [including] interviews, speech, and analysis of events."

His offence? Well, the Iranians say "propagating against the regime," "collusion to organize riots" and "insulting the Supreme Leader." Such are the charges brought against journalists in Iran, which this year ranked 175 out of 179 countries in Reporters Without Borders' Press Freedom Index.

Dr. Zeid-Abadi is best known for his articles defending the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, encouraging political reform in Iran and supporting the Middle East peace process. Domestically, his work has earned him solitary confinement, torture and humiliation.

Internationally, he has been awarded the 2010 Golden Pen of Freedom Award from the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers and UNESCO's 2011 Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has pledged under international law to uphold the freedom of thought, conscience and expression, and to relinquish torture and degrading punishment. Why do these not apply in the case of Dr. Zeid-Abadi and countless other political prisoners?

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's violations of international human rights commitments to which it is a party and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held political prisoner Dr. Ahmad Zeid-Abadi.

[Translation]

Hon. Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis: Honourable senators, today I wish to share with you my deep concern over the eroding human rights situation in Iran. I am particularly concerned about the growing number of political prisoners, the ever high number of executions, including of minors, the widespread use of torture, unfair trials and the exorbitant sums required for posting bail, and the severe restrictions on the freedom of information, expression, association, beliefs, academic freedom and the freedom of movement.

• (1530)

Take the case of Mahdieh Golroo, a young, female, Iranian student activist who was prevented from pursuing her post-secondary education. Before being imprisoned, she was actively involved in the campaign process for the Iranian election on June 12, 2009.

At 7 a.m., on December 2, 2009, Iranian security forces officers arrested Mahdieh Golroo and her husband, Vahid Lalipour, at their home. The couple was transferred to block 209 of the Evin prison. The arrest of her husband, who had never been involved in political activities, was used during the interrogation of Mahdieh Golroo to force her to collaborate with the Iranian regime. Her husband's arrest was designed to force Golroo into accepting the charge of collaboration with the PMOI or the MKO, the People's Mujahedin of Iran, a militant opposition group, a charge that Golroo has always rejected.

Vahid Lalipour was released on bail on February 21. His hearing took months. On August 23, 2011, on his wedding anniversary, Vahid Lalipour was arrested again and transferred to Evin to serve a one-year prison sentence. Mahdieh Golroo's case was under the jurisdiction of the 26th Branch of the Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Pir Abassi. She was charged with propaganda against the regime, colluding against public safety and collaborating with the People's Mujahedin of Iran.

On April 11, 2010, branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court sentenced Mahdieh Golroo to two years and four months in prison. Her lawyer, Amir Raissian, was unable to review her case file because of the security restrictions imposed by judicial authorities. On the day of her trial, Mahdieh Golroo defended herself in court without her lawyer. On July 7, 2010, branch 54 of the Tehran appeals court set Ms. Golroo's final sentence at two years in prison.

Mahdieh Golroo has suffered from numerous physical ailments during her incarceration. On May 2, 2010, she was refused medical care despite her physical condition. On June 9, 2010, she was reportedly transferred to the infirmary as a result of a severe intestinal illness. Prison officials once again denied her access to a physician.

During an interview on July 22, 2010, Mahdieh Golroo's husband stated that during a recent visit, she had again complained of numerous physical ailments. Since the medication she required to treat the illness is manufactured in the west, prison officials denied her access to it.

Like many other political prisoners, Ms. Golroo has been denied visitation rights with her family and husband.

On November 7, 2010, Mahdieh Golroo and other political prisoners were transferred to Evin prison's methadone block, which consists of a small enclosed room that houses dangerous criminals and drug addicts. Prisoners held in the methadone ward are given access to fresh air for only one hour a day. They also do not have access to the prison library or the telephone.

On December 21, 2010, Mahdieh Golroo began a hunger strike. Branch 4 of Evin Court charged her with negatively influencing public opinion.

Two weeks later, on January 5, 2011, she was allowed to visit with her family. However, one week after that, she was once again deprived of visitation rights. Mahdieh Golroo is currently being held at Evin prison. She was supposed to be released at the end of October; however, a new trial was held and she will now be released only in April or May 2012.

Honourable senators, I would like to take this opportunity to strongly condemn the use of the death penalty in Iran and call on the Iranian authorities to institute a moratorium on executions, pending the abolition of the death penalty.

I deeply deplore the lack of fairness and transparency of the judicial process and of appropriate professional training for those involved therein. I call on the Iranian authorities to release all political prisoners, as well as all of the individuals named in the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ahmed Shaheed.

In conclusion, I urge the Iranian government immediately to allow United Nations Special Rapporteur Ahmed Shaheed to enter Iran to address the country's ongoing human rights crisis. The government's complete lack of cooperation with the Special Rapporteur and its continued refusal to allow him access to the country are an indication that it has no intention of taking meaningful steps to improve the human rights situation.

I believe that it is also very important for Canadian companies to live up to their responsibility to society by abstaining from supplying Iran with goods, technology or services that could be used to control and censor the flow of information and communication or to track individuals, including human rights activists.

As a member of the Canadian Senate, I condemn the deplorable human rights abuses that the Iranian regime is perpetrating, and I demand the immediate liberation of all of these illegally held prisoners.

[English]

Hon. Jacques Demers: Honourable senators, I rise today to express my horror of the treatment of Abdollah Momeni, a student activist who was detained and taken to Evin prison within days of the June 2009 presidential election.

He has been sentenced to four years and eleven months in prison. Mr. Momeni is currently being held in ward 350 of Evin, a ward maintained for political prisoners. His wife Fatima told the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran in October that her husband is under interrogation in prison and he is not in good spirits. Currently, he is taking medication for his ear, which was torn due to the beatings he received in jail. Fatima and her children have been prevented from visiting him in prison. She said:

My children are young and are forbidden from seeing their father, as am I. How I would love to embrace my husband. I don't know what grudge they hold against Abdollah that no matter what do, they are not satisfied. They don't grant us visits or phone calls.

Honourable senators, today I join my colleagues in expressing my disgust and outrage over the systematic suspension of basic human rights in Iran. I call for the immediate release of Abdollah Momeni, a prisoner of conscience.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iran regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner, Abdollah Momeni.

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Today, I am happy to join many colleagues and indeed many thousands of others around the world, who, like Canadians, live in countries where fundamental rights and freedoms are protected and guaranteed by laws, in raising our voices in appeal for the release of political prisoners in Iran. Let us be these prisoners' voices which are denied them by a country where political dissenters are routinely imprisoned and inhumanely treated.

• (1540)

One such dissenter is Heshmatollah Tabarzadi who has been a prisoner since 2009. He is held in exile in Rajai Shahr Gohardasht prison and endures daily harsh conditions. He is the Secretary-General of the National Democratic Front of Iran. In October 2010, branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court sentenced him to nine years in prison and 74 lashes.

Honourable senators, let us send a strong message of hope to all Iranians who courageously struggle every day against the tyranny of the Iranian regime and all those who languish in Iranian jails.

Let us jointly condemn the Iranian regime for its deplorable human rights abuses and plead with the authorities to release all political prisoners including Heshmatollah Tabarzadi.

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan: Honourable senators, I rise today to draw your attention to the plight of Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, a member of the Baha'i community in Iran. He was arrested in 2008. In 2010, the Iranian judiciary sentenced him and six of his colleagues each to 20 years in prison, but their only crime was caring for the spiritual and social needs of the Baha'i community.

Mr. Tavakkoli was a social worker who lost his government job in the early 1980s because of his Baha'i beliefs. Three years ago he was held for four months in prison without charge, and most of this time was spent in solitary confinement where he developed serious health problems.

He and his wife Tahereh Tuski have two sons, one of whom lives in Ottawa. As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights of the Iranian regime and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Behrouz Tavakkoli.

Hon. Doug Finley: Abdolfattah Soltani, a prominent lawyer and human rights activist, was arrested and transferred to Evin Prison in 2011. Mr. Soltani's current situation is in a state of limbo because he has not yet been issued a prison sentence.

His only crime is being a lawyer and peacefully defending human rights.

Mr. Soltani is the co-founder of the Centre for Human Rights Defenders, a reputable organization in Iran forcibly shut down by Iranian authorities in 2008.

He was arrested on two other occasions and endured a total of nine months in prison.

Mr. Soltani is a lawyer for numerous imprisoned members of the Baha'i faith. He has been described by his followers as one of the bravest human rights defenders in Iran.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights of the Iranian regime and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner Abdolfattah Soltani.

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, Bahareh Hedayat was a student activist at Tehran University's School of Economics, an active member of the woman's movement and the Campaign for One Million Signatures to Change Discriminatory Laws Against Women.

On December 31, 2009, security forces raided her home and placed her in solitary confinement at Evin Prison. She was charged with 16 counts including propaganda against the regime, active participation in post-election demonstrations, interviews with foreign media insulting the supreme leader, insulting the president, gathering against the regime, and on May 19 was sentenced to nine and a half years in prison. Like the millions of young women of her generation, Bahareh desires rights, dignity, equality, prosperity and freedom and she is one of these young passionate souls who fights to live in a just world.

However, in a country where rights to freedom, liberty and equality are violated daily, in a country where human rights advocates are persecuted for speaking out, in a country that has the highest per capita death penalty and the second highest number of executions after China, in a country where simply demanding the end of discriminatory laws against women and girls is considered a threat to national security, she and other young, free minds are risking their lives for their beliefs and rights.

I will finish by reading a passage Bahareh wrote to her husband:

I miss everything . . . every single thing . . . every cell in my body is in pain as a result of my longing . . . I am tired of the small dreams that are draining me of air . . . Envy . . . envy . . . You don't know what it feels like to be held in this damned cage and watch three people buried in front of your eyes; two of whom, particularly the last, were angels with exemplary characters . . . You can't imagine what it feels like . . . and I hope you never have to experience it.

Honourable senators, as a member of the Senate of Canada I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights of the Iranian regime and call for the immediate release of the prisoner Bahareh Hedayat.

[Translation]

Hon. Percy Mockler: Honourable senators, first of all, I would be remiss if I did not congratulate Senator Frum on the leadership she has shown in openly condemning, in this august Chamber, the serious human rights abuses taking place at the hands of a deplorable regime, the Iranian government.

As Canadians, we cannot tolerate the inhumane cruelty the Iranian dictatorship is inflicting on its people.

Honourable senators, no one has the right to use their power and that of their country to torture their people.

I join Senator Frum in saying:

[English]

Honourable senators, Mahvash Sabet, a member of the Baha'i community in Iran, was arrested in 2008. In 2010 the Iranian judiciary sentenced Ms. Sabet and six of her colleagues each to 20 years of prison. Their only crime was caring for the spiritual and social needs of her Baha'i community.

Before the 1979 revolution, Ms. Sabet was working as an educator at several schools and she also collaborated with the National Literacy Committee of Iran. After the Islamic revolution, she was fired from her job and blocked from working in public education.

Prior to her arrest, she served as a director of the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education where she also has taught psychology and management.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights of the Iranian regime and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Mahvash Sabet.

Hon. Leo Housakos: Honourable senators, I rise to speak on behalf of Habib Latifi. Mr. Latifi is a young Kurdish civil rights activist and a high achieving student who was arrested by numerous Iranian intelligence agents during an anti-government protest and transferred to Sanandaj Prison in 2007.

In 2008, the Iranian judiciary sentenced Mr. Latifi to death in a trial that lasted a few minutes, but his only crime was peacefully defending human rights. On the ninth day of his detention he was transferred to a hospital after suffering from a kidney hemorrhage. It was later discovered that Mr. Latifi almost died as a result of the brutal torture he had endured in solitary confinement.

He eventually filed a formal complaint against prison authorities but he was accused of lying.

Mr. Latifi is in danger of imminent execution.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights of the Iranian regime and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Habib Latifi.

Hon. Daniel Lang: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize the bravery of a fellow human being. Her name is Atefeh Nabavi; 30 years of age, a student activist and graduate student who was banned from continuing her education. She was arrested on June 15, 2009, during the mass arrests that ensued the presidential elections.

• (1550)

Atefeh was arrested, along with her cousin and six of their other friends, at her residence. She was transferred to ward 209 at Evin prison, where she spent 95 days under severe physical and psychological pressure in solitary confinement.

In December 2009, Branch 12 of Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced her to four years in prison on the charges of "contact with the Mojahedine Khalgh Organization," and the other crime was "participation in the protests of June 15, 2009."

The activities of her relatives abroad were the cause of the charges that were brought against her. Nabavi's lawyer made the following statement regarding this matter:

In Atefeh's case, it is apparent that the interrogation she endured and the charges filed against her were mainly due to her family associations. Most of the questions she was asked during her interrogation were regarding her uncle's activities abroad. In addition, there are no confessions in Atefeh's case files. Trying and charging a person based on family relations is in contradiction to the principle of "crime and punishment" present in international laws. . . .

Her lawyer said:

The only charge based on which my client can be taken to court is participating in the June 15 demonstrations in which nearly four million other people came out and protested. . . . It was not an illegal assembly by any means.

It is important to also note that her husband Ali is also in prison in Semnan since February 13, 2011, serving a one-year prison term, which will be followed with one year in exile on similar charges.

Like all honourable senators, I condemn this breach of human rights by this current regime in Iran.

Atefeh Nabavi, the Senate of Canada salutes you and prays for your immediate release. I join all senators in demanding your freedom from this unlawful confinement.

Hon. Michael L. MacDonald: Honourable senators, I bring to your attention the unfair treatment of Iranian citizen Rozita Vaseghi. Rozita Vaseghi, a member of the Baha'i community in Iran, was arrested in 2010. She is currently held in Vakilabad prison in Mashad. The Iranian judiciary sentenced Ms. Vaseghi to five years in prison and also banned her from leaving the country for 10 years. This sentence was increased by two years on appeal.

Ms. Vaseghi has endured months in solitary confinement and was issued new charges while imprisoned. In July 2011, she was sentenced to an additional five years in prison. Ms. Vaseghi was included by Amnesty International in its 2011 submission to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women drawing attention to prisoners of conscience.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner Rozita Vaseghi.

Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall: Honourable senators, I rise today to draw attention to human rights violations and abuses in Iran, in particular, the treatment of an Iranian university student by the name of Majid Dorri.

Iran's Ministry of Advanced Education has developed a system of issuing stars against students who have disciplinary action against them. After a student collects a certain number of stars, he or she is banned from education. The system is primarily used against student activists.

Majid Dorri was a starred student banned from continuing his education and was imprisoned on July 9, 2009. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison for "waging war against God," "acting against national security," and "disturbing public order." Majid's sentence was reduced to six years in prison by the appeals court and his exile sentence remains.

He was recently transferred from Evin prison to Behbahan prison, a location that is 1,000 kilometres away from the residence of his parents. Majid will now have to complete the remaining years of his six-year prison sentence in Behbahan, a prison where there are no political prisoners and where most have committed crimes such as murder, drug trafficking and theft.

Majid has submitted, through his family, numerous letters and requests to judicial officials. To date he has not received any response from authorities.

Majid was suspended for a few terms from university before being completely banned from continuing his education in 2007, after protesting against the mismanagement and tight security at Tehran's Allameh Tabatabai University.

Majid's mother has spoken publicly about her son's prison exile, saying that "He suffers from migraines, is anemic and can't stand up for days." The Behbahan prison lacks medical and cultural facilities. Majid recently fractured his ribs. The conditions at the prison are tragic. At the time of his arrival the water supply was cut off so Majid, who had arrived in shackles and had travelled many kilometers from Tehran, was unable to wash his hands and face. There was no access to water and, as such, hygiene is non-existent.

Majid Dorri was not permitted to contact his family prior to his departure to Behbahan prison. Now that he is 1,000 kilometres away, it is even more difficult for his family to visit.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Majid Dorri.

Hon. Yonah Martin: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak of Youcef Nadarkhani, an Iranian Christian. Mr. Nadarkhani has lived a humble life as a pastor for a network of Christian house churches. He is an active member of the Protestant Evangelical Church of Iran. He is a devoted husband and father of two young boys ages 9 and 7. This biography would be unremarkable in a country such as Canada; however, in Tehran Mr. Nadarkhani has been sentenced to death. The charge, you ask? Apostasy and renouncing the Islamic faith.

Mr. Nadarkhani is being persecuted for his faith. Though the Iranian constitution states that it safeguards the freedom of religion, Mr. Nadarkhani's long history of enduring coercive tactics by police evidences that this safeguard is solely in name, not in action.

Mr. Nadarkhani was first imprisoned, charged with apostasy and then released in 2006. Later in 2009, an educational policy required all children to read from the Quran in school, including his two boys. When Mr. Nadarkhani objected to this indoctrination, he was reported and then again charged and imprisoned. The justice system is far from just, and Mr. Nadarkhani's lawyer noted several procedural errors ultimately culminating in his sentence — execution by hanging.

Honourable senators, I condemn the religious persecution of Mr. Youcef Nadarkhani. In today's 21st century, individuals should be free to practise their faith and answer the call from their "God," regardless of where they call home.

I join my honourable colleagues in condemning the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Youcef Nadarkhani.

Hon. Michael Duffy: Honourable senators, it saddens me to think that the great people of Iran, a country that in the past has contributed so much to the world, are now subjected to the tyranny of the fanatical regime.

Hamed Rouhinejad's prison sentence and so-called crime goes a long way to show just how backwards, cowardly and absurd Iranian justice is.

For the backwards part, we need only look at Mr. Rouhinejad's crime: He was found guilty of being a monarchist. In other words, his crime was having a political opinion that differed from the severe orthodoxy of the Iranian regime. In Iran, having political opinions that are different from what the regime is offering can land you in prison. How can we call the Iranian justice system anything less than backwards?

• (1600)

Now, let us use Mr. Rouhinejad's case to see how cowardly the pitiful Iranian regime is.

Mr. Rouhinejad suffers from multiple sclerosis. He is a sick young man. He is physically weak. He currently sits in prison without access to medical care, and, according to his father, his condition is deteriorating.

This is the true face of the Iranian regime — so paranoid, so afraid of dissent that they will go so far as to imprison a sick and diseased young man because of his political beliefs.

In Iran, everyone is seen as a threat, even people who would never have the physical strength to affect the regime. How can we call the Iranian justice system anything less than cowardly?

In all of this mess, it is easy to see how absurd the justice system is, but to quantify the absurdity, let us see the sentence Mr. Rouhinejad received for his crime. For associating with monarchists, this university student received a death sentence. It truly boggles the mind. Luckily, Mr. Rouhinejad's sentence has been reduced to 10 years. What a joke. In Iran, you can be sentenced to death for the smallest of reasons. How can we call the Iranian justice system anything less than cruel and absurd?

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights, and I call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner, Hamed Rouhinejad.

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, based on information provided to me, I would like to describe the following situation. Arash Sadeghi is an imprisoned student activist, currently held in Evin Prison in Tehran, Iran.

He was first arrested in July of 2009, and he has endured much physical and psychological torture in prison.

Sadeghi described the torture he endured at the hands of his interrogators, and it included the following: He was hung from the ceiling from one leg and left hanging for long periods of time. He was slapped for two to three hours, causing damage to his eye and optic nerves and causing his eardrum to tear. The interrogators urinated on his face while holding his mouth open.

He was pushed down from a height of two to three metres, causing damage to the tendons in his legs. He was dragged on scorching hot asphalt, resulting in severe damage to his skin. He was beaten repeatedly in the neck with a baton, resulting in damage to the vertebrae in his neck.

Sadeghi has been released and rearrested on several occasions. He has never received treatment for his many and serious health issues arising from his treatment in prison.

Honourable senators, I condemn this inhuman treatment of any individual in today's world and call for the immediate release of prisoner Sadeghi.

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Honourable senators, Saeed Matinpour, an Azerbaijani journalist and civil rights activist, was arrested in 2008 and transferred to the notorious Evin Prison. In the same year, the Iranian judiciary sentenced Mr. Matinpour to eight years in prison, but his only crime is peacefully defending free expression and minority rights. His crimes, according to the Revolutionary Court, were contact with foreigners and propagating against the regime, but, according to his wife, he annoyed the Revolutionary Court by requesting that Iranian

Turkish children be taught in their mother tongue in school and by advocating for them to speak and write in their own tongue. He also participated in a seminar in defence of Turkish-speaking citizens, with 10 other people, in 2007. All the others were acquitted, but he alone was harshly sentenced. His wife believes this happened because he annoyed his interrogator by refusing repeated requests to say that he had received money from the U.S.

His eight-year sentence, his wife said, is a result of his interrogator's wrath, a personal vendetta.

Mr. Matinpour has endured extreme torture by prison authorities and, although previously healthy, has suffered heart attacks, has severe back pain and has a lung infection as a result.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner Saeed Matinpour.

Hon. Rose-May Poirier: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak on behalf of Mehdi Khodaei, an Iranian student and human rights activist, who is currently serving a seven-year prison sentence in Iran. Mehdi Khodaei has been detained since February of last year. According to the Human Rights House of Iran, he is confined in ward 350 of Evin Prison, which is run by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. He has also had to endure months of detention in solitary confinement and is deprived of communication with his family.

Khodaei was found guilty of "propaganda against the regime" and "acting against national security by organizing gatherings." In other words, he is being persecuted for having exercised his rights to freedom of expression and freedom of movement.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I also condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner Mehdi Khodaei.

Hon. Nancy Greene Raine: Honourable senators, sponsored by the Government of Canada and 41 other states, on October 27, 2011, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on Iran to release all arbitrarily detained individuals held for exercising their right to peaceful assembly and expression. The resolution drew the highest number of votes since 1992, with 86 countries in favour, 32 against and 59 abstentions.

Honourable senators, Mr. Kouhyar Goudarzi is yet another human rights activist being held as a political prisoner in Iran.

Mr. Goudarzi was arrested on July 31, 2011, in Tehran, along with two of his friends, including his roommate Behnam Ganji, who was held in prison for eight days and committed suicide shortly after his release.

In September, Nahal Sahabi, Behnam Ganji's girlfriend, also committed suicide. According to unofficial reports, she was suffering from depression after Behnam's death. Both suicides have raised serious concerns regarding Kouhyar Goudarzi's safety.

Kouhyar Goudarzi's mother, Parvin Mokhtare, was also arrested at her home in Kerman. His mother is held in the general ward of Kerman prison. Recently, she was tried in court, then transferred back to prison. She was sentenced to 23 months in prison by the Kerman Revolutionary Court. She was deprived of a lawyer during her trial. According to human rights groups, Mr. Goudarzi's mother was told by security officials that she has no need for legal counsel or a defence team.

Mr. Goudarzi was first arrested in December of 2009, during a protest against the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He was charged with "propaganda activities against the regime through collaboration with the Human Rights Reporters Committee" and "transmitting news and information to terrorist organizations outside Iran and giving interviews and publishing articles in foreign media." Mr. Goudarzi was sentenced to a year in jail and released in December 2010.

Honourable senators, it took three months following Mr. Goudarzi's second arrest, at the end of last July, for supporters to find out that he is being held in solitary confinement in ward 209 of Evin Prison. The Iranian judiciary has charged him with "gathering and colluding against national security through membership in the Committee of Human Rights Reporters" and "propaganda against the regime through giving an interview to the Spiegel publication." However, Iranian authorities have remained silent on his condition.

• (1610)

According to Iran's civil rights regulations, a person arrested has the right to immediately notify their family on the location of their detention. Telephone calls and visitation rights with the family are also legal rights in Iran. Clearly, these have all been denied.

In the past four months, various international human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and Reporters Without Borders, have issued statements expressing concern over Kouhyar Goudarzi's situation. The continued silence by the Iranian regime on his current condition is inhumane.

Honourable senators, like many of us here, I too am very concerned about the situation of political prisoners in Iran. We believe these people are in danger. We call on the Government of Iran to respect fully its human rights obligations in law and practice. Tell the world what has happened to Kouhyar Goudarzi and his mother Parvin Mokhtare.

Hon. Bob Runciman: Honourable senators, I rise today to support this motion and to speak about Majid Tavakoli, a student leader in Iran who was sentenced to more than eight years in prison for the simple act of speaking out against the illegitimate presidential election in 2009. Participating in an illegal gathering, propaganda against the system, and insulting officials were the trumped up charges on which Majid Tavakoli, a student of shipbuilding at Tehran's Amirkabir University of Technology, was tried and sentenced to eight and a half years in prison. It was a trial that even his lawyer was not allowed to attend. His most recent arrest was the third time he was jailed for standing up for human rights and democracy.

It is strongly suspected that he has been tortured, both physically and psychologically, and that he has spent months in solitary confinement. His family has been denied access to him for months at a time. Majid is being held in the feared Rajai Shahr Prison, a hellish place in which political prisoners are housed alongside the most dangerous men in the country in unimaginably harsh conditions. This is a place that could exist only in a country that has no regard for human rights and no respect for human dignity. It is a place designed to break the bodies and the spirits of those imprisoned within its walls. However, Majid is not a man whose spirit is broken easily. When given the opportunity, he continues to urge his fellow students to continue the struggle for freedom.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Majid Tavakoli.

Hon. David P. Smith: Honourable senators, I rise to indicate my support for the motion that has been presented today and the facts set out. I have had close friends from Iran for over 40 years, such as the late Fred Kasravi, whose father was a great agricultural professor and gardener for the former shah, and Toni Mehraei and other close friends since the 1960s. I have heard so many stories. On several occasions I have gone to Paris in June of each year when they hold the annual rally for democracy in Iran. I have seen 70,000 Iranians there from all over Europe and around the world, and I have stood and bonded with them. I feel bad that I was not aware that this was occurring today, but we have to be in support of these people being held.

I fly to India frequently for personal reasons and was there two or three weeks ago. I usually fly over Iran, and each time I do, I look down and think about them. I just wanted to rise and indicate my support.

Hon. Judith Seidman: Honourable senators, Hossein Ronaghi Maleki, blogger, human rights activist and an advocate against cyber censorship, was arrested and transferred to Evin Prison in 2009. In 2010, the Iranian judiciary sentenced Mr. Maleki to 15 years in prison, but his only crime is peacefully defending human rights.

Unsanitary and inhumane prison conditions and multiple protest hunger strikes have cost Mr. Maleki one kidney, and he just received his fourth operation on the other. Given this dangerous kidney condition, Mr. Maleki's health is at serious risk.

Mr. Maleki has endured many months in solitary confinement and has been subjected to serious physical and psychological pressure. Mr. Maleki is among Iran's intellectuals. He should be treated as an outstanding individual rather than locked up and tortured.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn every abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of unlawfully held prisoner Hossein Ronaghi Maleki.

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: Honourable senators, on February 19, 2009, Shabnam Madadzadeh, a 24-year-old Iranian student, was arrested on her way to school. I want honourable senators to imagine for a moment how they would feel as parents if that happened to their child.

Shabnam was arrested for supposedly attending a party the night before that she says she did not attend. She was imprisoned for a year, during which time she was subjected to untold abuse and months of solitary confinement. Finally she was sentenced to five years in prison for heresy and anti-government activities. Shabnam is being held in the infamous Evin House of Detention, referred to as the country's Bastille.

Heartbreakingly, in April 2009, the Iranian courts issued an agreement to release Shabnam on bail, but an Iranian judge personally blocked her freedom, saying that he needed to discipline her. People are routinely tortured and killed in this prison. I want honourable senators to remember our Canadian journalist, Zahra Kazemi, who died of blunt trauma after being arrested for taking pictures in front of the prison. In other words, she was beaten to death. An autopsy revealed signs of extreme torture.

Honourable senators, as a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for Shabnam Madadzadeh's immediate release.

Hon. John D. Wallace: Honourable senators, I rise to express my profound concern, sadness and dismay at the severe human rights abuses being suffered by Seyed Zia Nabavi, an Iranian student who was arrested in Iran on June 15, 2009, after participating in a peaceful post-election protest. Zia graduated from the Babol Noshirvani University of Technology with an engineering degree. However, he was prevented by Iran's Ministry of Advanced Education from completing his master's degree in sociology after he was labelled a starred or banned student. Following his arrest, Zia was sentenced to serve 10 years in the Karoun Prison in Ahvaz. After being transferred there, he was severely beaten and sent to solitary confinement for 48 hours.

In an open letter written recently to the head of human rights for Iran's judiciary, Zia describes the horrific and inhumane conditions in the prison. The following are excerpts from his letter:

Based on the number of beds available, this ward has a maximum capacity of 110 prisoners, but, on average, it holds more than 300 prisoners at a time. . . . we experience difficulties fitting in the rooms, even when standing, which has forced many to sleep on the floors (I slept without a bed for six months). A third of the prisoners sleep outside in the courtyard. . . . a large number of prisoners are forced to spend day and night outdoors, regardless of the weather conditions . . . living with mice and cockroaches has become common.

. . . the sewage system clogs once in a while, pours into the courtyard, and covers the area where prisoners sleep. The smell fills the entire outside area and lingers for hours. Although breathing the same cigarette smoke filled air in a confined area with many other prisoners is torture in itself, when mixed with the stench of sewage, it becomes even more unbearable; particularly if it begins to rain heavily because the courtyard turns into a swimming pool and it becomes impossible to move back and forth to the bathrooms and

toilets. . . . What is even more heartbreaking is that, despite the sewage covering the entire outside area, the prisoners are forced to lay out their belongings and sleep and eat in the same area.

• (1620)

Honourable senators, Seyed Zia Nabavi is not simply a name, or words, or just another picture that appears in a newscast. He is a real, live human being. He is a son, he is a grandson, he is a brother, he is a cousin, and he is a cherished friend to his schoolmates. He is to each of them what our children and friends are to each of us. They are part of us.

Seyed Zia Nabavi is the future of the Iranian community. The anguish, sorrow and torment suffered by Zia's family as a result of his inhumane and unjust imprisonment is plainly evident from his father's plea to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran:

Zia is my only son. He is my right hand. We are worried about him so much. I pray and hope that the Lord will help us and bring him back home to his family. . . . It is very difficult to feel that there are no possibilities to explore to do anything for him.

. . . I have tried many times and I did not get anywhere. It is so difficult to bear this. If anybody could help Zia's release or at least help him be transferred to a closer area, those authorities who could help in any shape and form, please help so we don't suffer as much. My only wish is the release of all of sons and my own son. Zia was an honor student in university.

Honourable senators, as a member of the Senate of Canada, I make this my personal request and plea to the Iranian authorities to demonstrate compassion, understanding and respect for the strength, freedom and dignity of the Iranian human spirit, by immediately releasing Seyed Zia Nabavi from his captivity in the Karoon Prison and allow him to return home to his family and to his Iranian community.

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I, too, rise today in support of Senator Frum's motion.

I just want to say a thank you to Senator Smith for his heartfelt comments on this. I think that is why we are all part of this today; we know we have a responsibility to stand here and shine a light.

Today it is my responsibility to point out the plight of Isa Saharkhiz. He, too, is a real person, with a real family and with sons. Mr. Saharkhiz and I were born in the same year and, like me, he is a long-time journalist, but he is the proof that journalism can be a dangerous craft in a tyrannical and vicious regime such as Iran's.

For years Mr. Saharkhiz worked for the Iranian regime as a journalist, even heading up its news agency in New York before returning home to run domestic publications. This was during a time of comparative press freedom in Iran, if we can use that phrase, and he was one of its architects.

When the political climate grew even more restrictive, Isa left government service and then was banned for life from returning. He therefore founded a reformist newspaper and magazine, criticizing the regime's running of the economy and so, too, those publications were banned.

In 2009 he was sentenced to three years in prison for "insulting Iran's supreme leader" and that sentence was later increased to five years. When he gets out, he will be banned from journalism and political activity for a further five years.

His son says that in jail Isa Saharkhiz has been subjected to inhumane and violent treatment, and that his health has now deteriorated. Last month it was reported that he was chained to a hospital bed in Tehran, supposedly for medical treatment.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I join with my colleagues today to condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of all unlawfully held prisoners, including Isa Saharkhiz.

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, first I want to applaud Senator Frum for her initiative.

As I move the adjournment of this important inquiry, I think back to 1987 when I was a reporter and stood outside the walls of the notorious Evin Prison for a few days. A Canadian engineer was being held there and it was a pretty scary time, but at least he was freed. I then spent four more days on the Iran-Iraq war front: four days I would not recommend to anyone in this room. I can hardly believe 25 years have gone by.

With those memories and with the heartfelt comments of fellow senators I, too, would like to speak to this important issue. We know we can never look the other way when it comes to human rights, particularly in Iran, and especially today in Syria.

I therefore move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Munson, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

POVERTY IN NEW BRUNSWICK

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Fernand Robichaud rose pursuant to notice of December 7, 2011:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the 2009 poverty reduction strategy of New Brunswick.

He said: Honourable senators, today I would like to talk about poverty and the strategy adopted to eliminate it in my province of New Brunswick.

Very eloquent statistics were recently presented by Campaign 2000 and the Saint John Human Development Council in New Brunswick.

We learned that, in 2009, there were still 14,000 poor children in New Brunswick and 41,000 people receiving social assistance. This is still unacceptable. It is one of the reasons why the province developed a poverty reduction strategy. NGOs in New Brunswick are deeply committed to fighting poverty.

Many volunteers are working tirelessly to promote social justice, fight poverty, eliminate food insecurity and improve the distribution of collective wealth. Their efforts are very commendable and, above all, necessary.

People like Sister Auréa Cormier and other volunteers have been and continue to be committed to the fight against poverty. Many of them helped develop the New Brunswick poverty reduction strategy.

In 2009, the province adopted a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty and make major reforms to its social assistance program. A formula that would discourage dependency and encourage self-sufficiency among the poor was needed. The ultimate goal is to tear down the welfare wall that keeps people on social assistance. The poor are sometimes better off remaining on welfare than trying to get off it.

New Brunswick's new strategy was developed in three phases and I believe it to be realistic, innovative and inclusive.

In early 2009, no less than 2,500 people were consulted about how they thought poverty could be eliminated. Not only were government and community stakeholders consulted, but poor and previously poor people were asked for their opinions about how to change the welfare system.

Next, round tables were organized and about 30 representatives of the public, private and community sectors identified ways of reducing poverty and reforming the system.

• (1630)

The last phase involved gathering some 50 provincial officials, business people, representatives from NGOs and, of course, representatives from all the political parties. Together, in November 2009, they adopted a five-year action plan called *Overcoming Poverty Together*. All the participants reached a consensus and signed a common document with a common goal. All the leaders of the provincial political parties signed this New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan. For two years now, the people committed to the fight against poverty have been keeping an eye on the governments and writing progress reports on the implementation of this action plan.

Among others, Sister Auréa Cormier, who was also involved in the Common Front for Social Justice, has just prepared her progress report. Only one of the three actions to be taken immediately has been taken, namely to eliminate the Interim Assistance Program rate that provided \$294 a month to an employable single person. The extension of health card coverage has not yet been completed and neither have the changes to the policy on household incomes.

Of the ten initiatives to be achieved over the next five years, action has been taken on three of them. Among the seven initiatives remaining, there is the increase to minimum wage, which is currently \$9.50 an hour and should be increased to \$10. This increase was put off until April 1, 2012.

With regard to the measures related to continuing education, skills acquisition for life and community involvement, progress is slow.

Honourable senators, I think it would inspire governments across the country if they looked at the National Council of Welfare's studies and documents that present poverty-fighting expenses as an investment.

Another recent document from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives estimates that the direct cost of poverty to the Government of New Brunswick is close to half a billion dollars; that represents 6.5 per cent of the 2009-2010 provincial budget.

What is more, the entire cost to New Brunswick society is nearly \$2 billion. These numbers include the supplementary costs of poverty, including health care, fighting crime and the shortfall in taxes due to the loss of economic activity. Honourable senators will agree that \$2 billion a year is quite significant.

Federal transfer payments and tax credits are extremely important in preventing poverty in New Brunswick. Without those programs, the poverty rate in New Brunswick, which is currently 9.7 per cent, would be 24.8 per cent.

To fight poverty is to invest in the future. That is true for all levels of government, and governments can do more. Our society must rediscover sharing and compassion. We can fight poverty by promoting education and health and by supporting one another.

If we invest in fighting poverty today, we will lower health care costs and other social costs in the future. Eliminating poverty nationwide is an investment in our future and that of our children and grandchildren.

(On motion of Senator Chaput, debate adjourned.)

ORDERS OF REFERENCE OF SENATE COMMITTEE

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau rose pursuant to notice of January 31, 2012:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the content of committee orders of reference.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to have this opportunity to talk about a subject that has interested me for some time. Since my appointment to the Senate, I have had the honour of sitting on many of the 19 standing committees, including those on aboriginal peoples, official languages and national finance, and the Committee on Rules, Procedures and

the Rights of Parliament. I also chaired the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans from 1996 to 2005. I have participated in studies of bills and estimates and in special studies.

Recently, as a member of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, I chaired the Subcommittee on the Review of Committee Budgets and International Travel. Those who have had the pleasure of sitting on this subcommittee know that the process can be both fascinating and very complex. And that is putting it nicely.

It is my belief that committees are at the core of the Senate's work. They are recognized for their important contributions to legislation and public policy. Committees were called "the heart and soul of the Senate" by Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, the first woman Speaker of the Senate, because of their focus on social, economic and political issues.

In the course of their work in examining bills or policy issues, Senate committees sometimes travel to gather testimony at the local and regional levels. Committees may hold formal public hearings in locations throughout Canada, and undertake more informal fact-finding trips both within Canada and abroad.

Committee travel enables senators to better familiarize themselves with and get a first-hand grasp on the issues they are studying and to obtain evidence and information that could not otherwise be easily obtained in Ottawa. On average, committees conduct about 18 trips per year.

The Senate's budget for committee work in 2011-2012 is \$3.75 million. Of this, \$500,000 is set aside for the expenses related to witnesses, videoconferencing and working meals in Ottawa for all committees.

The Subcommittee on the Review of Committee Budgets is tasked with recommending the allocation of the remaining funds, which requires a careful review of the budget submissions of committees that wish to incur other expenses — in general, those relating to the hiring of professional services and travel.

We must, of course, take into account the cap of \$1.25 million that the Internal Economy Committee has imposed on domestic and international committee travel in making our recommendations.

Before a committee can adopt a budget, it must first seek the authority of the Senate for an order of reference. Indeed, Rule 90 states that "A standing committee shall be empowered to inquire into and report upon such matters as are referred to it from time to time by the Senate." With the exception of the Rules Committee, Internal Economy and the Committee on the Conflict of Interest for Senators, committees have no "standing" mandates and are not empowered on their own accord to study matters. In other words, our committees are creatures of the Senate and it is the Senate that must approve what a committee may study.

Sometimes, it is a bill that is referred to a committee after second reading, or in the case of the Standing Committee on National Finance, it is the main or supplementary estimates. However, in many cases, it is a special study.

Committee members normally meet at the beginning of a session to discuss what they would like to study. Some committees are very specific in their studies and develop detailed, focused orders of reference that explain exactly what they would like to study and indicate clear reporting dates.

• (1640)

For example, for the recent studies by the Social Affairs Committee on Canada's health care system, on mental health and population health, very detailed orders of reference were developed, which included the main themes that the committee wished to examine.

As another example, the Foreign Affairs Committee studied "the rise of Russia, India and China in the global economy and the implications for Canadian policy" using a very short but specific order of reference. The committee followed this example when it agreed to a similar study on Canada's relations with Brazil.

These two committees eventually asked the Senate for budgets to permit them to travel within and outside Canada for public hearings and fact finding activities. With clear orders of references and objectives, I am sure it was easy for the Committee on Internal Economy and the Subcommittee on the Review of Committee Budgets to grasp why funds for these activities were being requested.

Still other committees choose broad orders of reference to allow them a level of flexibility in examining subjects that fall within their general areas of expertise as set by the *Rules of the Senate*. Broad, open-ended orders of reference can be a useful tool for committee members to keep themselves informed on emerging issues related to their subject areas. That is quite understandable. For example, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade has used its order of reference to examine such issues as may arise from time to time relating to foreign relations generally to hear from international officials from the United Nations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Similarly, the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce is using its study on the present state of the domestic and international financial system to hear from the Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, and to learn about financing growth capital for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Banking Committee has heard over 15 witnesses since the beginning of the session.

However, in the case of these two studies, the committees asked for very minimal budgets from Internal Economy to accomplish this work — mostly for small items such as subscriptions to specialized publications and miscellaneous expenses — since the bulk of their work, such as hearing witnesses in Ottawa, requires no budget application to the Internal Economy Committee.

[English]

At a minimum, it is my belief that orders of reference should include a general idea of a committee's objectives and a time frame for the study, including a reporting date. Committees

should have an idea of what outcomes they wish to achieve, and the study should have some focus and direction. Members of the committee should know where they are going and how they will get there. They may not always need a GPS, but at least a plan.

I also believe that, because all orders of reference must be adopted by the Senate, the Senate itself should be aware of a committee's objectives. Regretfully, however, many orders of reference are adopted by the Senate with little or no debate. I do understand that it may be because our fellow colleagues have a respect for the work of committees and recognize that committees are generally masters of their own destiny in choosing which topics they wish to examine. Nonetheless, all senators have a duty to make themselves aware of the orders of reference they are approving to enable Senate committees to do their work.

I make this point because of some of the challenges that I perceived as chair of the subcommittee on the review of committee budgets. This fall our committee examined budget applications for the current fiscal year of 2011-12. Some committees came before us with broad orders of reference. Some had well-developed work plans, which imposed self-discipline and focus on their studies as well as on their budgets. Others did not.

In my view, it is not for our committee to question the parameters of an order of reference that the Senate has already adopted; nor do we feel that the subcommittee can or should micromanage a committee's work plan. Our role is to consider the budgets as they are presented to us. The role of the subcommittee is not to judge what the Senate has authorized the committees to do. The Senate has already made that judgment.

By the time our subcommittee examines a budget, a committee's study is well under way. The Senate has adopted the order of reference, and the committee has adopted a work plan or witness list and has begun to hear witnesses in Ottawa.

It should be noted that in chapter 3:06, section 2(2) of our Senate Administrative Rules — what we call SARS — requires committees to present a budget containing a general estimate of the total cost of a special study. It states:

A budget prepared for the purposes of subsection (1) shall contain a general estimate of the total cost of a special study and a detailed estimate of the special expenses of the committee for the study for the fiscal year.

In our first report to the Internal Economy Committee, the subcommittee alerted committees that we will be looking for such general estimates in future budget applications, recognizing that this requirement may force committees to seek tighter orders of reference with firm reporting deadlines.

With \$500,000 already set aside for all committees to hear witnesses in Ottawa, hold videoconferences and have working meals, committees can hold extensive hearings in Ottawa to accomplish their work and may not need to incur other expenses. As a consequence, some committees do not even have to submit budget applications to the Internal Economy Committee.

However, if committees do want to go beyond these expenses, usually either by travelling or hiring personnel, they should have either a focused order of reference or a clear and coherent work plan. For example, if a committee wishes to travel to Washington for its work, then the order of reference of the committee's work plan should include a reference to the need to learn about Canada's bilateral relations with the United States.

Committees should also be prepared to defend the elements of their budgets, not just to the subcommittee but to the Senate and to Canadians. We are spending public funds and must do so in a responsible and transparent manner. At all times, but especially in this period of economic restraint, we must be prepared to demonstrate fiscal prudence.

Given the cap imposed on committee travel, never has it been more important to question the value of trips. I recognize that senators place an immense value on committee travel and I share that view. Whether for public hearings or fact-finding, committee travel permits committee members to connect and engage with people on matters of national importance all across Canada. As one senator put it, nothing can replace face-to-face contact.

However, when committees develop their orders of reference and budgets and are contemplating travel, members must ask themselves — and must be prepared to answer — these types of questions: Why do we need to go there? Of what value is this trip to our study? What do we hope to learn? How will travelling there contribute to our report to the Senate? Will this trip enhance our study?

Indeed, when orders of reference come before this chamber, as senators, we should be questioning the mover of the motion or committee chairs about how much a study might cost and whether the committee has set parameters on its proposed study.

Honourable senators, I must draw your attention to the fact that our committee used a new process to examine committee budgets in the past year. We invited committee chairs to present their budget applications to the subcommittee in the company of all chairs whose budgets included funds for hiring contracts or travel. In the past, we met strictly with individual chairs one at a time. This time, we had all chairs in the same room at the same time. In my opinion, this was an excellent format as it allowed all chairs to hear what their colleagues were requesting. It helped to put their demands into perspective.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all those chairs and, in some cases, the deputy chairs when the chairs could not be there, who appeared before our committee. I commend them for respecting their speaking times and the limits imposed. The members of our subcommittee learned a great deal from their presentations, and the information gathered helped us to make informed decisions on budget allocations.

To conclude, the objective of my inquiry was to share my views on what should be included in committee orders of reference and on the connection between committee studies and the budget process. I hope that other honourable senators will also share their opinions and insights on this topic, which relates to work that I know honourable senators take seriously.

• (1650)

I contend that committees should be clear about what they intend to accomplish when they agree to take on a study and develop an order of reference. If committee orders of reference are drafted as broad and open ended, committees should still determine a study's parameter, desired outcomes and results. This can be done by developing a work plan together and by speaking to the order of reference when its adoption is sought in the Senate. The work plan does not have to be extremely detailed; committees need some flexibility and may indeed need the flexibility to adjust their studies depending on the evidence they gather.

To help us develop these plans, as committee members we have access to the research and subject matter expertise from the analysts provided by the Library of Parliament and by the procedure and logistics expertise of our committee clerks. We do have excellent people from the Library of Parliament and excellent committee clerks. However, there must be certain coherence in the work undertaken by a committee. It is imperative to the other members of the Senate and to the Canadians that we serve. Senators, as well as members of the public, including the various interest groups who follow our work, need to understand in some detail where a committee is going, how it will get there, how long it will take and how much it will cost.

I thank honourable senators for listening, and I would invite and encourage others to join in this important debate.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I want to thank Senator Comeau for his comments. As a member of the subcommittee dealing with the budgets for committee, I thank him very much because it is challenging when you get a reference from a committee that is pretty vague. We are trying to make a judgment on how to spend taxpayers' money.

Like Senator Comeau, I believe that the value of Senate committees travelling outside of Ottawa is extremely important. It is wonderful to sit in a small community and listen to the interests of its citizens on whatever committee it happens to be. There is no better value than meeting face to face with Canadians and explaining and getting their viewpoints on issues related to a committee.

As the honourable senator said in his comments, it is neither the job of the subcommittee nor of the Internal Economy Committee to judge what we think of the terms of the order of reference because they have been passed by the Senate.

The honourable senator spoke of the responsibility of the committee to have a clear reference and work plan. Our job as a subcommittee was made easier by the committees that came before us with a clear reference. However, when a term of reference comes before us, is it also not the responsibility of senators to look at it and before passing it, which we sometimes do routinely, ensure that in fact it is a clear term of reference for that committee? If it is not, is it not our responsibility to stand up and ask questions so that it is further clarified?

Senator Comeau: May I request five minutes?

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Comeau: I do thank Senator Cordy for those comments. While I am on my feet, I would like to thank both Senator Cordy and Senator Larry Smith for the excellent work they did last year for the committee. It was a joy to be able to work with people who do take the work of committees very seriously. I know both Senators Smith and Cordy committed a lot of time to and placed a lot of value on the work that committees do.

I appreciate the comment that the honourable senator has made, namely that it should be incumbent on all senators, when an order of reference is placed before this chamber, to spend a lot of time on it and to question it. We are not questioning our colleagues' desire to look at a certain subject but whether we might be able to improve upon the order of reference. By asking such questions in the chamber, we are doing our job. This is our job. It is our job to question. We should be placing a heck of a lot more time on that than what we are doing now. Often, we are presented with an order of reference and it goes through so quickly that it is almost an afterthought.

I am inviting all senators to do that, including if, by any chance, our subcommittee does ask for money. As a subcommittee, we do not seek an order of reference from the chamber, but, by all means, let us question. We are doing it for the right reasons. It will help us, as a subcommittee, if those questions are asked in this chamber as well. We will be able to go back to this exchange that happened on the floor of the Senate.

I thank the honourable senator for the question.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there further debate before we take the adjournment motion? It is moved by Honourable Senator Fraser?

Hon. Joan Fraser: As soon as she congratulates and thanks Senator Comeau for raising this topic. He has reason to know that it has been a bug bear of mine for a long time and I do wish to speak to it.

(On motion of Senator Fraser, debate adjourned.)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO STUDY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "CHARTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH"

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk, pursuant to notice of February 2, 2012, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to study and report on the establishment of a "Charter of the Commonwealth" as agreed to by the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Perth, Australia, in October 2011 and its implications for Canada; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than April 13, 2012 and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings until April 30, 2012.

The Hon. the Speaker: It was moved by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk, seconded by the Honourable Senator Neufeld, that the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade be authorized to study —

An Hon. Senator: Dispense.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, pursuant to the immediately preceding discussion, I wonder whether Senator Andreychuk can give more detail on this motion. It sounds like an important and timely study, but, for example, is the honourable senator planning to travel? If so, where? How does she plan to do this work and can she give us a little more idea of what is involved?

Senator Andreychuk: Honourable senators, thank you for the opportunity to speak to the motion. Thank you to Senator Comeau for putting out issues that we have worked on here. We have not reached the point of having committees uniformly bring their concerns and budgets at the same time, but we are working on it. I think his reflections on how the committee worked this year are helpful.

Minister Baird has asked our committee to conduct this study. The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group included Senator Segal from our chamber in a study on how to revitalize the Commonwealth. They put together an exhaustive report which was filed to the heads of governments in Perth, Australia. One of the recommendations was that there was to be a charter of the Commonwealth. It is not a human rights charter, although it does include some human rights aspects. It is really a revitalizing of the Commonwealth, a charter that brings together the commonality of the Commonwealth as opposed to what might divide the Commonwealth, since Commonwealth members are small country states and large countries and are variously situated around the world. It became timely to look at the Commonwealth. They have recommended a charter of the Commonwealth. It is embedded in the aforementioned report, but it is not the definitive word. There is a possible charter in there.

The heads of government met in Perth, Australia, in October and agreed that they should look into the feasibility of this charter. The ministers of foreign affairs of the various Commonwealth countries were tasked to look into the feasibility. Minister Baird has contacted our committee to look into the feasibility of having an association. There was to be a national consultation in the eminent persons process. The heads of government then transferred that responsibility to the ministers of foreign affairs.

The minister, because there is a time frame of April 13, has asked us to look at it to the best of our ability and to study the feasibility of a charter of the Commonwealth from a Canadian perspective.

• (1700)

Bearing in mind it is a very short time, we will not travel and we will not need any extra funds. We do have the opportunity within our committee to study this possibility, and to give advice to the

minister. I do not know what that advice will be. It will be up to the members. Whether we will approve the charter concept or whether we approve it with provisos, I have no idea, but we will do what we can in a short time. It works in with our study quite nicely because we are trying to finish up our Brazil study. Our researchers need to do more writing and drafting. We have a window of opportunity to shed light on the Commonwealth, this idea of a charter, and to bring forward people who are interested in the Commonwealth — such as the Royal Commonwealth Society — and perhaps some NGOs that are looking into the subject. We will make some comparisons with other regional groupings. Do they have this kind of charter? I know the Francophonie has an actual Charter of Rights. Should they be leaning towards that or embracing this charter? Of course, we will hear from the minister and representatives from the department.

Senator Fraser: Will you hear from representatives from the Commonwealth?

Senator Andreychuk: Yes, through the Commonwealth Society. We are soliciting interest in the study that the Eminent Persons did. They contacted Canadian representatives and we hope to have them appear before our committee.

In conclusion, our goal is to assist the minister in giving advice to the heads of government in the Commonwealth. We will do the best we can in the short time, and we do not contemplate any additional resources.

Senator Fraser: I gather the committee will be consulting an array of people in Canada. Will the committee also be hearing from people elsewhere, which can be done without travel? Will the committee hear from people in the Commonwealth Secretariat, from other representative members of the Commonwealth, or will this just be what Canadians think?

Senator Andreychuk: This is to be a national consultation, not an international consultation. That may be the next step that the foreign ministers take, but the heads of government indicated they wanted to consult in a national way. There are no rules as to how the consultation should take place. That is for each country to determine its capability. This is the mechanism in the short time that the minister has chosen.

We wish to invite the Commonwealth Secretariat, that has stood shoulder to shoulder with the Eminent Persons working on this matter. What was their idea? What was their thinking? What was the outcome they wanted from a charter?

From my own personal point of view, the proposed charter talks about the existing mechanisms within the Commonwealth — such as the Harare Declaration, the Latimer House Principles, et cetera — so we will review existing mechanisms. However, we may wish to challenge them and ask about implementation strategies. It is nice to have a charter but these days when we examine these matters we want to know how to implement them. I think in our organizations we are beyond addressing principles alone; we want to examine principles and action. Perhaps that will be the advice, but I would be guided by the members of the committee.

[Translation]

Hon. Fernand Robichaud: Honourable senators, could the chair tell us whether the minister has asked the House of Commons committee to conduct a study, as he asked us to do, or whether it is depending entirely on the Senate committee to provide him with advice?

[English]

Senator Andreychuk: I would like them to rely on us. As one member said in our committee deliberations, it is to the credit of our committee that we have been asked.

The other place is currently undertaking studies, so I am not fully aware of why we were asked to do so. However, if I were to posit my own reason, it is that Senator Segal was on the Eminent Persons. Some of us have been very involved with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Senator Johnson is on the executive committee. Committee members have some experience with the Commonwealth and maybe they are starting to think of using the Senate standing committee, with our long-term view, our knowledge and our expertise, in a way that is timely.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there further debate? Are honourable senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, February 8, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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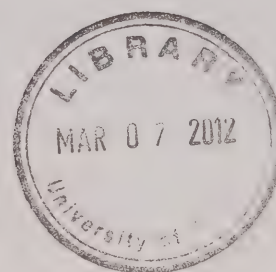
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Wednesday, February 8, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 8, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to advise that today Inuktitut will be spoken during Senators' Statements. When it is, the floor language will be on channel 1, the English on channel 2 and the French on channel 3.

[Translation]

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw to your attention the presence in the gallery of Jean-Marc Robitaille, Mayor of the City of Terrebonne and a former member of Parliament and parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance. With him is his spouse, Monique Robitaille; Frédéric Asselin, municipal councillor and chair of the City of Terrebonne planning board; Denis Lévesque, general manager, and his spouse, Mariette Lévesque; and Diane Legault, assistant to the mayor. They are guests of the Honourable Senator Carignan.

On behalf of all senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

[English]

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, as many of you know, I spent part of my career as a police officer serving in some of Canada's toughest neighbourhoods, both in Winnipeg and in Vancouver. Every day on the job was rewarding, but some days were tougher than others. However, no form of training can really prepare an officer for that gut-wrenching visit when you must inform a parent that their son or daughter was killed.

I cannot describe the anguish that immediately takes hold of parents during those trying moments, to which I bore witness on far too many occasions. These moments for the informed often mark the beginning of a lifetime filled with anger, uncertainty and an understandable desire for retribution to be served upon the souls of those who committed these heinous acts. Some of us in this chamber know of which I speak.

Honourable senators, today I stand here in understanding of our colleague Senator Boisvenu. I have not lost a child, and I will likely never be able to comprehend the life-altering pain that a

parent who has experienced a situation like this must feel. However, I was the Member of Parliament for Mission—Port Moody during the time when the "Beast of British Columbia," Clifford Robert Olson, committed his atrocities against some of the children in my constituency, followed shortly by the discovery, in the same riding, of the barbaric acts of Willy Pickton.

I have been exposed to what the dark side of humanity is capable of, and I have seen first-hand the path of destruction it leaves on an individual. I understand the background that would motivate certain off-the-cuff comments.

Shame on those who stooped to the lowest of the low to suggest that partisan leanings were factors in the recent comments made by Senator Boisvenu.

Some Hon. Senators: Shame!

Senator St. Germain: I am totally dismayed by the political game that the NDP is making of this in the other place. Their grandstanding is, quite frankly, disgusting. To try and make a political point off of another colleague's expression of raw emotions — those which are founded in personal grief — is about as unparliamentary as one can get.

I do understand that Pat Martin called Senator Boisvenu on Monday night to offer his apology for the public comments he made last week. I have always known Pat Martin to be a good MP who has contributed much to Winnipeg, to Manitoba and to Canada. However, he has done himself a huge disservice, and he has influenced no one with such vulgarity and petty behaviour. I can only hope that this incident has made all members of Parliament remember to think before they speak.

Honourable senators, we are all here to focus on the betterment of Canada, not to assassinate each other's character. Let us readjust our focus and proceed with the business at hand.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

INUKTITUT LANGUAGE WEEK

[Editor's Note: Senator Watt spoke in Inuktitut — translation follows.]

Hon. Charlie Watt: Honourable senators, today I rise on the occasion of Inuktitut Language Week.

Although this initiative was created by the Government of Nunavut, the Inuit language is also spoken in northern Quebec, Labrador, and the Northwest Territories, and in cities where the Inuit choose to live. Montreal, Ottawa and Winnipeg also have vibrant Inuit communities.

I am proud to say that my mother tongue is one of the strongest Aboriginal languages in this country. This is because Inuit continue to use their language at home. I am grateful that

honourable senators are supportive of my wish to speak Inuktitut in this chamber as sometimes the words come more easily for me in my mother tongue.

When I speak Inuktitut in this chamber, it is a source of pride for the Inuit to know that their language is recognized by the Parliament of Canada.

We, the Inuit, also look forward to further cooperation and support from this government in the area of Inuktitut literacy programs and the development of Inuktitut language films and television.

Our language and culture provide us with the stability that we need, keep us connected to our ancestors and unify our families. These are the critical elements in preparing our youth for success in other arenas, because we know that happy, well-grounded individuals are more likely to be contributing members of society.

Thank you. *Nakurmiik.*

• (1340)

[Translation]

SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, this week is suicide prevention week. In a previous speech on this subject, I mentioned a number of facts that I think bear repeating here.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death worldwide. Each day, more than 10 Canadians commit suicide. In the past 30 years, more than 100,000 Canadians have taken their own lives. According to the World Health Organization, at 15 per 100,000, Canada's suicide rate is one of the highest in the world. Also according to WHO, there are up to 20 attempted suicides for each death. Suicide is the second most common cause of death among people aged 10 to 24, according to the Quebec psychiatric association.

[English]

To talk about suicide is not a fun thing. It hurts us. We always find it painful, but we have to talk about it. We need to talk about it and tell everybody that suicide is not an option. We have to tell people that there are resources, and we need to help them.

[Translation]

Every time someone commits suicide, everyone suffers. During this suicide prevention week, let us all take a moment to reflect on what we can do as a society and, particularly, what we can do as senators to address the problem.

The House of Commons adopted a nearly unanimous motion calling for the development of a national suicide prevention strategy.

[Senator Watt]

I urge you, honourable senators, to support the motion I moved last fall. I hope that Senator Carignan, who is supposed to speak on this issue, will have the opportunity to do so, and I hope that we can count on his support.

[English]

FIREFIGHTERS WITHOUT BORDERS CANADA

Hon. Larry W. Campbell: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak about the great work being done by Firefighters Without Borders Canada.

Last month, along with 10 British Columbia firefighters and four graduates of the firefighting program at the Justice Institute of B.C., I travelled to El Salvador to help announce the delivery of training and equipment to Central America by Firefighters Without Borders Canada. Thirty-four firefighters from El Salvador received invaluable training from Canadian firefighters on fighting fires in large buildings. In addition, the Canadian firefighters received invaluable training from the *bomberos* of El Salvador in earthquake preparedness and earthquake extrication.

In addition, the Salvadoran firefighters received, among other equipment, 100 sets of turnout gear and 60 sets of breathing apparatus.

Since its inception in 2003, Firefighters Without Borders Canada has provided free equipment and training to firefighters all over the world including Thailand, the Republic of Congo and Paraguay.

Not only do these firefighters risk their lives on an ongoing basis to protect Canadian citizens, the members of Firefighters Without Borders Canada continue to donate their time and income to help firefighters abroad to work as effectively and professionally as those in Canada.

I commend their dedication and encourage honourable senators to support this organization in its future endeavours.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS, MARCH 27-APRIL 1, 2010—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union respecting its participation at the 122nd IPU Assembly and related meetings, held March 27 to April 1, 2010, in Bangkok, Thailand.

SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
FEBRUARY 17-19, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union respecting its participation at the 259th Session of the IPU Executive Committee, held February 17 to 19, 2011, in Geneva, Switzerland.

ANNUAL SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
CONFERENCE ON THE WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION, MARCH 21-22, 2011—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union respecting its participation at the 2011 Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization, held March 21 and 22, 2011, in Geneva, Switzerland.

ASIA-PACIFIC WORKING GROUP MEETING,
JULY 14, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Inter-Parliamentary Union respecting its participation at the Asia-Pacific Working Group Meeting, held July 14, 2011, in Jakarta, Indonesia.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

PUBLIC SAFETY

INFORMATION OBTAINED BY TORTURE

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canadians were stunned yesterday to learn that in December 2010, this government quietly issued a directive to CSIS authorizing the use of information that may have been obtained through torture. On October 19, 2009, a little more than a year ago, the government was telling Canadians a very different story. In a document tabled before a committee in the other place, the government's response was:

The Government of Canada's policy on torture and the use of information elicited through torture is clear. As stated by the Minister of Public Safety on April 2, 2009, we do not condone the use of torture in intelligence gathering. Our clear directive to our law enforcement agencies and our intelligence services is that they are not to condone the use of torture, practice torture, or knowingly use any information obtained through torture.

My question is: Was the Minister of Public Safety misleading Canadians in April and October 2009? If not, when did the government's policy change and why?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank Senator Cowan for his question.

The government's position is clear. We do not condone and certainly do not engage in torture. When we have information that Canadian lives are at risk, we will act without delay. Canadians expect no less. Our government will always protect Canadians from those who wish to harm us. To be clear, we do not condone torture and we do not engage in torture.

Senator Cowan: The same document from which I read, dated October 19, 2009, went on to say:

Federal departments and agencies involved in protecting Canada's national security do not condone or support torture or other abuses of human rights. This unequivocal position is supported by the recent ministerial direction issued to CSIS by the Minister of Public Safety, which clearly states that the government is steadfast in its abhorrence of and opposition to the use of torture by any state or agency for any purpose whatsoever, including the collection of intelligence.

• (1350)

That sounds unequivocal to me. Yet, the government is changing its position and privately saying one thing and doing another. Canada is a party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Supreme Court has been clear on the issue. The government took a public position that was consistent with the convention, with the Supreme Court decision in 2009, and with international and Canadian law.

Can the leader tell honourable senators whether the government has informed other governments around the world, including the Government of Afghanistan, about this change in government policy?

Senator LeBreton: My answer will be exactly the same, honourable senators: The government does not condone and certainly does not engage in torture. When the government has information that Canadian lives are at risk, it will act without delay; Canadians expect no less. The government will always protect Canadians from those who wish to harm us. The government's position is clear: It does not condone and certainly does not engage in torture.

Senator Cowan: The government's position is apparently clear as well in that it will use information obtained by other governments and agencies through the use of torture. Is that correct?

Senator LeBreton: I can say only that when the government has information that Canadian lives are at risk, it will act without delay. I would imagine that any Canadian would expect that of the government. The first priority is to protect Canadians from those who wish to harm Canadians. The government's position is clear: It does not condone and certainly does not engage in torture.

Senator Cowan: However, the government will use information obtained through the use of torture outside Canada. How does the government square that with the obligations it has under Canadian law and under international treaty and law?

Senator LeBreton: Try as he might to put words in my mouth, the honourable senator will not succeed. The government does not condone or engage in torture.

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, the Leader of the Government in the Senate said that the government will act without delay. Does that mean the government will act without delay in torturing someone to get the information or in using the information that it obtained through torture?

Senator LeBreton: That is a ridiculous question. The government neither engages in torture nor condones torture.

HEALTH

TRANS FAT REGULATIONS

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, we also discovered this week that in 2009, the government chose to ignore the findings of its Trans Fat Task Force and the recommendations of Health Canada experts and to back out of its promise to impose federal regulations to limit the levels of trans fats in Canadian foods. The government relied instead on a system of voluntary industry action — a system which clearly did not work. However, Canada's Minister of Health continues to support this failed approach.

High levels of trans fats have been proven to be detrimental to the health of Canadians, as highlighted by the government's Trans Fat Task Force. Why did the Minister of Health renege on her promise? When will the government start to treat the health of Canadians as a priority?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The government is treating the health of Canadians as a priority. We are working to ensure that consumers and people like myself who shop for products and read their labels have the product information they require to make informed decisions. We took action with our trans fats monitoring program, which is reducing trans fats in Canada. Almost 75 per cent of prepackaged foods have met the new targets. We continue to work with industry in an effort to further reduce trans fats.

Senator Cordy: Honourable senators, monitoring is one thing but following up and taking action to help Canadians live healthier lives is another. The federal government is showing no leadership in this area. Health Canada has said that regulations on trans fat restrictions would improve the health of Canadians. Industry has not met the voluntary reduction targets set by former Health Minister Clement. One health department briefing to the minister states that critical gaps remain, primarily in bakeries and the food services sector. Health Minister Aglukkaq continues to claim that the food industry is making progress toward lowering trans fats in its products, but the evidence from Health Canada is showing otherwise.

The leader seems quite assured that voluntary measures are making a difference. Will she table evidence in the Senate indicating that the food industry is making progress? A promise was made by the Harper government to regulate trans fats if voluntary measures failed and voluntary measures have failed. Why has the government ignored the evidence and gone back on its word?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I would argue that 75 per cent of foods meeting the criteria is not failure. I would argue that it is proof positive that the industry is responding. When the Minister of Health speaks, she does so with some knowledge. The food industry has worked with the government. Those of us who read labels, which I do because of my husband's health, can see a marked difference in the last few years as a result of government efforts to work in cooperation with industry. A 75 per cent success rate to date is pretty impressive.

Senator Cordy: If the Health Minister is so certain about her responses, I am curious to know why she ran away from the media yesterday when they were asking her questions about the issue.

The leader is right in saying that some areas have improved, but the success rate in other categories, such as prepackaged baked goods, is dismal: 75 per cent of croissants fail to meet the target; 67 per cent of doughnuts fail to meet the target; and 55 per cent of brownies fail to meet the target. Everyone loves to eat those foods but those foods do not meet the targets set by the Trans Fat Task Force, the government and former Health Minister Tony Clement. Minister Clement said that if the targets were not met within two years, the government would bring forward regulations.

The current regulations have not been met by industry. There seems to be a pattern. A department or a minister sets up a working group, such as this one or the one on sodium; departmental officials spend valuable time and money on an issue and prepare briefing notes to the minister to indicate why action should be taken. Then, at the last minute, after all that time and money is spent, the minister rejects the data. This happens frequently. When the minister is asked questions by the media, he or she runs away from the issue.

Can the leader bring honourable senators up to date on the status of the targets set by the working group put in place by Minister Clement?

Senator LeBreton: At first I thought the honourable senator was referring to me when she talked about running away from the media; but I run away from nothing.

The government is working to ensure that consumers have the information they need to make informed and healthy choices. What would the honourable senator want me to do the next time I see her reaching for a croissant — slap her wrist?

Senator Cowan: This is a serious matter.

• (1400)

Senator LeBreton: I am taking this matter seriously and I do not need any lessons from Senator Cowan.

The fact is we are working with the industry. There is significant success so far. As these products come to market, consumers are now being given more information on the content of those products. We are working with the industry and making every effort to ensure that consumers make informed choices. At the end of the day, if we can educate consumers about the content of food, not only will we have better health outcomes, but they will be better informed.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, my wife tried slapping my wrist when I reached for a brownie, and as you can tell it did not work very well.

ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY

EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE LEVELS

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, we know that cuts to the federal public service in Atlantic Canada have hurt the region disproportionately. According to Treasury Board, from 2009 to 2011, 450 federal positions were cut in Atlantic Canada. We also know that many more are coming, including cutting 42 positions at the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and closing eight Service Canada centres.

If the government is determined to cut positions in Atlantic Canada, could the leader tell us if the high paying jobs that the former Minister of ACOA ensured went to Conservative friends and failed candidates like Kevin MacAdam and Cecil Clarke are also on the chopping block? We all know the old adage: Last in, first out. Can the leader assure honourable senators that anyone who was recently hired will be the first fired?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, obviously there will be some adjustment to jobs across the country as a result of the government looking for savings. The senator mentioned specifically Mr. MacAdam. Mr. MacAdam was hired — and I believe I have pointed this out to Senator Mercer previously — through a competitive process run by the agency, free of political interference. Thanks to this government, because we post these positions, this process was open to all Canadians. Any appointments we have made are based on merit.

Senator Mercer: The Just For Laughs Festival is down the road in Montreal. With an answer like that, does the honourable senator think we are going to believe that?

Honourable senators, ACOA is slashing public jobs in order to save money but is shelling out hundreds of thousands of dollars on failed Conservative candidates and friends in federal positions. This is nothing new. For example, there is the aforementioned Kevin MacAdam, who was hired as Director General of ACOA's P.E.I. operation. Prince Edward Island is an island off the coast of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It is a beautiful place; you should all go there. The position of Director General requires proficiency in French, and one would assume it requires him to actually live in P.E.I. so that he can monitor the province. However, Mr. MacAdam has apparently lived in Ottawa since his

appointment and studies French here. Meanwhile, there are many schools in Atlantic Canada where he could study French, including the University of Prince Edward Island and Collège Acadie, both in P.E.I., that island off the coast of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Could the leader explain how the government thinks spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on Mr. MacAdam's position is a good expenditure of the public purse when he seems to be too busy hobnobbing with Pete and his buddies rather than serving the good citizens of P.E.I. and all Atlantic Canadians?

Senator LeBreton: I never thought that I would have to rely on Senator Mercer for a geography lesson to let me know where Prince Edward Island is. I know full well where it is, and I agree it is a beautiful place.

I am not familiar with the circumstances regarding this individual's French language training. I would dare say, honourable senators, that Senator Mercer may have colleagues that would be rather upset that one of their colleagues was criticizing a public servant for having French language training.

With regard to the positions at ACOA — and I do believe I answered this before, but if not, I will say it again — these reductions will not take away from the services being provided to the entrepreneurs and communities of Atlantic Canada. Employees affected by this decision are receiving assistance to transition to new jobs, new training, or attrition applies as they are retiring. However, as I mentioned previously, when we are talking about good jobs for Atlantic Canada, our national shipbuilding strategy is an excellent example of the jobs and growth agenda of this government. We will continue to pursue good opportunities for all Atlantic Canadians into the future.

Senator Mercer: Earlier the Leader of the Government in the Senate said that she did not want Senator Cowan putting words in her mouth, and I do not want the Leader of the Government in the Senate to put words in my mouth. At no time was I critical of the fact that Mr. MacAdam is on French language training. My criticism was that he is in Ottawa on French language training. He is supposed to be in Prince Edward Island. He is supposed to be working for ACOA on behalf of Islanders and Atlantic Canadians, but he is in Ottawa studying French. There are at least two schools in Prince Edward Island, a number in New Brunswick, and some very good schools in Nova Scotia. All are within easy driving distance of the Charlottetown office of ACOA. Why is Mr. MacAdam not studying in P.E.I., New Brunswick or Nova Scotia instead of wasting taxpayers' money by being in Ottawa so he can hang around with his buddy Pete?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, there is an adequate sound system in the Senate. The honourable senator does not have to shout to be heard.

I am not going to comment on the various language training facilities that people can avail themselves of, except to again support the government's full commitment to our Official Languages Act and the linguistic duality of our country.

[Translation]

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

SERVICE CANADA—SERVICE LEVELS

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and concerns the closure of 98 of the 120 Service Canada offices over the next three years.

You will remember, honourable senators, that I have been closely following the reorganization of Service Canada centres since February 2011. I have never shied away from extolling the merits of Service Canada, especially the provision of services to official language minority communities. Service Canada could have been a model for other federal institutions for a long time to come. I understand that the reorganization is due to budget cuts, hence the importance of good planning and anticipating the impact of the changes.

Therefore, I would like to ask the Leader of the Government to provide us with the following information.

How many of the 98 offices that will close — where there are approximately 600 jobs — are located in regions designated as bilingual? Which ones? What is the exact number of positions that will be cut? How many are full-time, part-time and contract positions? How many of these positions are in regions designated as bilingual and which ones? How many of these positions are designated as bilingual?

As for the 22 offices that will remain open, how many positions will remain? How many are full-time, part-time and contract positions? How many of these positions are in regions designated as bilingual and which ones?

Can I count on the leader to obtain this information for us?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I thank the senator for the question. I will take the question as notice and respond at a later time because she has asked for a significant amount of detail.

• (1410)

With regard to the overall plan of HRSDC for the operation of Service Canada, I think we all agree that the services provided to Canadians have been vastly improved by Service Canada. Some small community offices have been closed, but government employees did not work in those offices. As I have pointed out in last few days, the government and HRSDC are moving from a paper-driven process to an automated process.

Significant progress has been made on automation.

Today, for instance, Canadians complete 99 per cent of the nearly 3 million Employment Insurance claim applications online. Over the next three years, our goal is to have 70 per cent of the processing of EI applications fully or partially automated. At

present, almost 20 per cent of claims are fully automated and 58 per cent of claims are fully or partially automated. These are claims that are filed online, matched with an electronically submitted record of employment and approved quickly for payment. It is a much more efficient method than the old paper method.

With regard to the numbers, the various locations and the bilingual capacity, honourable senators, I will be happy to take the question as notice and seek the answer she wishes.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: Monday's edition of *La Presse* reported that there are significant delays in the processing of 80,000 employment insurance claims. The claims of thousands of Canadians that should normally be processed in 21 days are taking 123 to 128 days to process.

The government itself admits that it was unable to provide workers who had lost their jobs with these essential services within the prescribed time frame and that it had to quickly bring in 400 additional employees to process claims.

How can the government reassure Canadians by telling them that, three years from now, it will be able to provide these services effectively with 600 fewer employees?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, this year, as in others, we have added resources in anticipation of the seasonal effect of unemployment in the winter. Over the last number of weeks we added 475 employees to the processing efforts and shifted 120 positions from part-time to full-time status.

Honourable senators, Human Resources and Skills Development is working extremely hard to ensure that the people who apply for benefits get them.

This whole exercise is closely monitored by Service Canada to ensure that Canadians receive the benefits to which they are entitled as quickly as possible.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: Canadians understand full well that the government is trying to cut costs. However, is it reasonable to expect Canadian workers to bear the brunt of these budget cuts when they are already being forced to wait for months to receive their first employment insurance benefits?

Does Service Canada's restructuring plan indicate how such delays will be avoided with fewer employees to process employment insurance claims?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I will dispute the claim that Canadians are being subjected to unduly long wait times before they get their benefits. I do not think that is correct. I do not know the source of the senator's information.

I just explained that services have been improved through automation and I explained also that, because we are in a seasonal peak time, Service Canada has actually added people and moved people from part-time to full-time status to process these applications quickly.

As part of the written response that I will request on behalf of Senator Chaput, I will ask also what the normal wait time is.

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, last year I asked the same question because of this situation and I am asking this again because the situation has not changed. I am looking at the situation of requests for CPP disability claims filed in New Brunswick. The standard across the country is supposed to be 90 days for a reply. Last year I indicated to the leader in this place that the norm was double that time in New Brunswick for a New Brunswicker applying for CPP disability benefits to receive any kind of answer.

Two weeks ago, I called the 1-866 number on behalf of one of my constituents to receive an answer. They said, "We will call you back within five days." Well, it is two weeks later. I finally got in touch with a director at the centre and I asked, "What is going on?" This application has been in the process for more than 180 days. That is twice the standard that it should be in Canada, but in New Brunswick it is longer than that. She said that even after 180 days the file was still in the triage process. That is the kind of service that we have in New Brunswick and it is unacceptable. I asked the leader that question last year and am asking it again this year.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I cannot respond directly to the question. There are often circumstances that develop. I do not know what the circumstances are with regard to this particular individual. Obviously, there is some problem, according to the senator. However, I cannot answer the question because I have no details on the case. I would have to have much more information before I could give a detailed answer.

Senator Ringuette: Ask for the statistics with regard to applications.

Senator LeBreton: I will be very happy to put the senator's question. I will take the question as notice and see what we can do.

[Translation]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

COAST GUARD—RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRES— BILINGUAL SERVICES

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The government announced its intention to close the rescue coordination centre in Quebec City in 2012. Effective March 31, 2012, air and marine rescue missions in Quebec will be coordinated from centres in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Maritime communities in Quebec are still very concerned about this decision. The government maintains that new communication tools will allow the centres in other provinces to take care of rescue operations in Quebec.

However, the centre's transfer to other provinces does not take into account the importance of language and knowledge of local geography or the fact that, in a situation where lives are at stake and every second counts, it is not enough for staff to be bilingual; they must be able to speak French well enough to understand people when they are in a state of panic.

Why is the government prepared to jeopardize people's safety by disregarding the obvious problems of language and geographic knowledge?

[English]

There are elements that technology cannot replace. The dispatchers working in the Quebec rescue coordination centre have a detailed knowledge of not only the region's geography and the names of the small towns but also the language, accents and regionalism spoken in Quebec. Why does the government refuse to reconsider this decision when it is obvious that the lack of dispatchers with a detailed knowledge of Quebec's French may cause delays?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank the honourable senator for the question. Our government is constantly assessing our search and rescue capabilities. Our government, like any government, always seeks to improve the service to assist Canadians and reduce the loss of life. With regard to the specific question, I will take it as notice.

• (1420)

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

SENIORS' BENEFITS

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, I am wondering about the status of the government's reply to a question that I asked on November 23, 2011, with regard to Old Age Security and the take-up of that program.

The leader took the question as notice and said that she would supply up-to-date figures. I wonder when I might expect to receive those.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government): If the honourable senator will allow us to check into that specific question, we will get back to her as soon as possible.

Senator Callbeck: Thank you.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THE SENATE

MOTION TO RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO RECEIVE ANNE-MARIE ROBINSON, PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, AND THAT THE COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE SENATE NO LATER THAN ONE HOUR AFTER IT BEGINS ADOPTED

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government), for Hon. Claude Carignan, pursuant to notice of February 7, 2012, moved:

That, at the end of Question Period and Delayed Answers on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission; and

That the Committee of the Whole report to the Senate no later than one hour after it begins.

(Motion agreed to.)

INCOME TAX ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Mitchell, seconded by the Honourable Senator Banks, for the second reading of Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (carbon offset tax credit).

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau (Acting Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I see that this item has reached its fifteenth day, and we do not want it to die on the Order Paper. However, with leave of the Senate, I would like to reserve the 45 minutes for the sponsor of the bill.

The Hon. the Speaker: If I understand correctly, Senator Comeau is asking to reserve 45 minutes for Senator Raine and wants to debate this right now.

Senator Comeau: Honourable senators, I will be brief. I see that this item has reached its fifteenth day, and I would like to have more time to prepare. I always like to speak to Liberal bills on the Income Tax Act. Nonetheless, I believe we have to be very careful with this type of bill.

[English]

We have to be very careful when Liberals propose any changes to the Income Tax Act. Therefore, with that said, I would like to continue to reserve the balance of my time for when I have had a chance to completely review the proposals by Senator Mitchell.

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

INTERPRETATION ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Charlie Watt moved second reading of Bill S-207, An Act to amend the Interpretation Act (non-derogation of aboriginal and treaty rights).

He said: Honourable senators, today I rise to speak on Bill S-207, An Act to amend the Interpretation Act. My bill deals with the Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Those rights are expressly recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

It is my responsibility as an Aboriginal senator to continue the process of shaping Canadian legislation for the betterment of our people.

Honourable senators, my bill is offered to this chamber as a small step toward upholding the rights of Aboriginal peoples and standardizing the manner in which these constitutionally recognized rights are considered and respected in federal legislation.

Our statute books are sprinkled with what we refer to as “non-derogation clauses,” but the wording of those clauses is not consistent, and they are absent from many pieces of legislation.

My bill proposes to amend the Interpretation Act to provide that no enactment — that is, no federal statute or regulation — is to be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from Aboriginal and treaty rights. This rule of interpretation provides a lens through which every bill should be evaluated for compliance with section 35 of the Constitution. It presumes a parliamentary intention to honour Aboriginal and treaty rights. This approach does away with the need to add a non-derogation clause to each and every bill in order to ensure that the bill contains no infringement of those rights.

Please keep in mind that the proposed new section 8.3 of the Interpretation Act would be subject to subsection 3(1) of that act, which provides that:

Every provision of this Act applies, unless a contrary intention appears, to every enactment, whether enacted before or after the commencement of this Act.

Honourable senators, I remind you that in 2007, the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs undertook their study on section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, which examined the use of non-derogation clauses in Canadian legislation.

In their report, they proposed some very fine recommendations to address the shortcomings in Canadian legislation. Honourable senators on both sides of the chamber participated in the committee work and expressed willingness and a desire to bring a resolution to this unfinished business.

The details of this can be found in the Standing Senate Committee report entitled *Taking Section 35 Rights Seriously: Non-derogation Clauses relating to Aboriginal and treaty rights*.

Honourable senators, the Senate has agreed to these important principles — including that a non-derogation provision should be added to the Interpretation Act — and my bill simply implements what has already been adopted.

For all these reasons, I am seeking your support to send this bill to committee for what I hope will be a short but meaningful stage on its way to the other place.

During the committee clause-by-clause consideration of this bill — if it is referred — a correction, by way of amendment, will be required to address a problem of the use of a double negative in the French version. The French word “pas” in clause 1, line 6, will need to be removed to reflect the English version and the intent of this bill.

I believe the Canadian public has an appetite for a healthier relationship with Aboriginal peoples. This bill is one way that we as senators can contribute something positive and meaningful to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

We as Aboriginal people will need the support of parliamentarians in both houses to bring this bill into legislation. I hope that honourable senators will take the time to read the committee report to give you the full background on my bill so that you can be an active participant in this process.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my work, and I trust this bill will make it to committee for further study.

Nakurmiik.

(On motion of Senator Comeau, debate adjourned.)

• (1430)

STUDY ON ACCESSIBILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

SIXTH REPORT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE AND REQUEST
FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ogilvie, seconded by the Honourable Senator MacDonald, that the sixth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology entitled: *Opening the Door: Reducing Barriers to Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, deposited with the Clerk on December 22, 2011, be adopted and that, pursuant to rule 131(2), the Senate request a complete and detailed response from the government, with the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development being identified as minister responsible for responding to the report.

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, I am pleased to speak today on this report entitled *Opening the Door: Reducing Barriers to Post-Secondary Education in Canada*. It is the final report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology on the accessibility of post-secondary education and research in Canada.

First, I want to thank all members of the committee, the researchers, the clerk, the translators and others who worked so hard on this report.

As well, I want to note the strong leadership role played by our steering committee, Senator Ogilvie, Senator Eggleton and Senator Seidman. I also want to offer a special thank you to all the people who appeared as witnesses because they took their time to share their views with us, and they are people who are deeply interested in and concerned about education.

I initially introduced this motion in the Senate back on April 29, 2008. I was pleased that it was accepted. It has taken a long time, but that is because the committee had a lot of legislation to study. As well, we had elections, and then Parliament was prorogued.

Now, I believe that post-secondary education and research are critical to the success of the nation. Post-secondary education benefits individuals and society. We need to make sure that every person who is willing and has the ability to attend post-secondary education can do so, and that includes not only universities but also community colleges, trade schools and other career training.

I believe that if the recommendations of this report are implemented, it will play a large role in increasing accessibility to post-secondary education and will help foster research and innovation in this country.

Today, I want to deal with just a few of the recommendations, as time does not permit me to deal with all of them.

One of the most interesting findings is that a young person's financial situation is just one of the factors that determine whether or not an individual will pursue post-secondary education. Many other factors come into play: high school completion, secondary school experience and grades, family environment and exposure to post-secondary education. For example, recent research by Statistics Canada shows that young people with parents who have a university education are twice as likely to get a degree themselves. Parental background is a huge factor as are the others that I mentioned. That is why the committee recommended that the federal government convene a meeting with all provincial and territorial ministers of education to develop a strategy to address these non-financial matters.

We also heard a great deal about financial issues. The committee's report contains a number of specific recommendations in this area, including a regular review of student loan limits so that the funding available takes into account increases in the cost of post-secondary education and increases in living expenses. We made this recommendation because the committee found that federal measures may be reviewed infrequently, and they do not always keep up with the times.

The committee also recommended that the federal government establish a relocation grant for low-income students who must leave their parental home to pursue post-secondary studies.

Income tax measures for students was a subject on which we heard a great deal, especially about tax credits. I recognize that tax credits are very useful for a large number of Canadians, but they are not for many others. It is known that these tax credits are non-refundable, which means that students must pay taxes in order to take advantage of them. However, about 60 per cent of students earn less than \$10,000 per year. They do not pay taxes; therefore, they cannot take advantage of these tax measures. In addition, several witnesses indicated that the ability to use tax credits was a greater benefit to wealthier students and their families than to those who really need the assistance.

This is why we recommended the federal government undertake a review of the effectiveness of these income tax measures. The government may find there is a more helpful and cost-effective way to break down the barriers that prevent people from accessing post-secondary education.

With regard to students with permanent disabilities who apply for student grants, the committee felt that there are additional factors from these students that must be considered, not just the income. There are often cases where students with disabilities have additional expenses, such as renovations for accommodations, and those expenses may run very high. The committee felt that those additional expenses should be considered. Therefore, we recommended that eligibility for the Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities and the Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities should not be based solely on income.

The committee also heard that some adults simply do not have the skills and knowledge required to pursue post-secondary education. One way of addressing this issue is through adult and family literacy programs. Statistics tell us that more than 40 per cent of working-age Canadians have low literacy skills. People with low literacy skills may be able to read the words on the page, but they may not be able to understand the meaning.

True literacy includes the ability to analyze, understand and apply what has been read. However, four out of ten Canadians have difficulty coping with the demands of everyday life. On an individual level, low literacy has been linked to poor health outcomes. People can be ill more often and can experience more mis-medications. They have lower employment rates and tend to make less money. There is also a correlation between literacy and crime. Seventy-five per cent of Canadian offenders have low literacy skills.

This is an issue that I care very much about, and you will be hearing a lot more from me when I speak on my inquiry on literacy later on.

Because adequate literacy skills are essential to the pursuit of post-secondary education, the committee recommended that the federal government, in collaboration with provincial, municipal and territorial governments and all other stakeholders, encourage

and strengthen adult and family literacy programs with the goal of helping Canadians develop the skills necessary to access post-secondary education.

In addition, the committee recognized the value of lifelong learning and recommended that the federal government look at ways to encourage small and medium-sized businesses to support continuing education and training of their employees.

We also looked at the issue of apprenticeship training. Some witnesses stated that the main barrier to apprenticeship training is the difficulty in finding employers who will take apprentices for on-the-job training. We heard that there is great value in hiring an apprentice. They told us that every dollar an employer invests brings an average return of \$1.47 at the end of four years, but still there are many employers who hesitate or will not hire an apprentice. Therefore, the committee recommended that the federal government promote the creation of lasting jobs for apprentices with tools for encouraging cooperation with the private sector.

The committee also heard the current funding mechanisms for research tend to favour larger universities, leaving smaller universities like those in Atlantic Canada facing difficulties in obtaining grants from research councils and from the Canada Research Chairs program. We therefore recommended a review to be done on those allocated mechanisms so that smaller universities are not disadvantaged when it comes to research funds.

• (1440)

In addition, the committee heard a lot about the indirect costs of research as they have risen significantly in recent years. In fact, in the 10-year period of 1996-97 to 2006-07, these costs went up from \$1.1 billion to \$1.7 billion. The federal program certainly does help, but the Indirect Costs Program covers only some of these costs and that means the universities have to cover the remainder. This leaves the universities with less money in their budget for other priorities, like teaching.

As mentioned in the report, the committee looked at the issue in 2008 as part of its study of Canada's science and technology strategy. We made the same recommendation in this report as we did in that last report. The recommendation is that funding for indirect research costs be increased to an international competitive level of 40 per cent of all direct grants.

Finally, I would like to address the unique challenges facing our Aboriginal students. One of the concerns that the committee heard over and over again was with regard to the capping of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program. Since 1996, despite the vast population increases among Aboriginal youth, this program has never been allowed to increase more than 2 per cent. That is why the committee recommended that this funding cap be reviewed immediately, so that funding for this program can better reflect the needs of Aboriginal students.

I believe that by addressing these concerns and others contained in the report, the federal government, if these recommendations are implemented, will increase our chances for success on the world stage. We face significant pressures in a highly competitive, knowledge-driven global economy. In the face of such pressures,

we must recognize the importance of increased participation in post-secondary education to our economic and social development goals. We need to make sure Canadians fulfil their potential through post-secondary education and workplace skills training. We must work together — federal and provincial governments, educational institutions, the private sector and the public — to plot our course for post-secondary education in this country.

I look forward to the government's response to the recommendations that the committee has made in this report, and I hope that we will get that response as quickly as possible.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

[Translation]

RULES, PROCEDURES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARLIAMENT

FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Smith P.C. (*Cobourg*), seconded by the Honourable Senator Cordy, for the adoption of the first report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament (*Revised Rules of the Senate*), presented in the Senate on November 16, 2011.

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I see that this motion was adjourned in the name of my colleague, Senator Smith. Once I have completed my presentation, I would like the adjournment to remain in his name.

Honourable senators, I would like to take a few minutes today to say a few words about the first report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament. As you know, this is a new version of the *Rules of the Senate of Canada*.

The subcommittee, made up of Senators Fraser, Carignan and Stratton, has put a great deal of energy and thoughtfulness into this major project. I sincerely thank them for that.

I believe that these changes will enable the Senate to function much more efficiently. If this version is adopted by the Senate, it will come into force in September.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I often refer to the Rules. The clear and logical presentation of the *Rules of the Senate* is critical to the exercise of my duties. I am pleased to see these improvements.

It is important to note that the subcommittee, along with the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and the Rights of Parliament, conducted a rule-by-rule analysis. That was a big job. The purpose of the exercise was not to change the meaning or the scope of the March 2010 version of the Rules. The purpose was to clarify them and make them more logical while preserving the spirit and intent of the document. To facilitate the transition to the new Rules, a cross-referencing table has been created so that senators can match up the old numbers with the new.

First of all, I would like to point out that, for the new French version, the committee worked with an expert in French parliamentary language in order to make the language easier to understand.

Reclassifying the Rules is also a positive new aspect. The sequence of the Rules and the new numbering system make the document much easier to understand and consult. The rules are now grouped together in a logical way in 16 chapters. I think the 16 chapters are structured in a more logical fashion than the 12 chapters in the existing *Rules of the Senate*.

For instance, there are separate chapters dedicated to emergency debates, time allocation and questions of privilege, just to name a few.

Furthermore, each rule is identified with the distinct numeric tag of its chapter, followed by the specific number of the rule. For instance, when a senator gives notice that he or she will raise an inquiry, he or she will cite rule 5-1, because the rule concerning oral or written notice is the first rule in the fifth chapter. As you know, this degree of organization does not exist in the current Rules.

Rethinking the glossary was also a crucial exercise. Now, instead of finding definitions of key ideas and concepts throughout the *Rules of the Senate*, we will be able to simply consult a single, comprehensive glossary. Appendix I, Terminology, will contain all of the definitions that are currently scattered throughout the *Rules of the Senate*, in one coherent section.

I am sure that this change will help us, honourable senators, to effectively interpret the rules and to better understand unique situations.

Changes have also been made to the Order Paper. I believe that the new format of this document will make it easier for us to follow and understand Senate sittings. The order of business is more detailed. In addition, the projected order of business for bills will reflect the progress of these bills. Those at third reading will be listed first, followed by committee reports on bills, then bills at second reading. This applies to government business and also to other business.

The government retains the option of reorganizing government business if it so wishes.

[English]

Some new provisions have been introduced with respect to the treatment of questions of privilege. The idea is to write the rules such that they reflect what has in fact become practice in the Senate in recent years.

In recent years, we have seen discussions and debate, not to mention several rulings from the Speaker, regarding the existing rules 43 and 59(10). As many honourable senators well know, these two rules are ostensibly contradictory. Rule 43 requires an elaborate notice period for questions of privilege to be raised, while rule 59(10) states quite plainly that no notice is required for questions of privilege to be raised. The revised provision attempts to resolve this inconsistency in a way that reflects, as I have mentioned, what has become recent practice.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I believe that the revised version of the *Rules of the Senate* is a significant improvement over the existing Rules, since it is more user-friendly, better written and more logical.

• (1450)

I am sure the new Rules will help us all to do our jobs as senators better.

Once again, I would like to thank the subcommittee and the members of the committee for their excellent work.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, do you agree to let the adjournment stand in Senator Smith's name?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Smith, P.C. (Cobourg), debate adjourned.)

[English]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY— MOTION IN AMENDMENT—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Raine, seconded by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;
- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;
- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and
- (g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products;

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Nolin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, that the motion be amended as follows:

- 1) By replacing the words "which is poised for market growth" by the words "which wants to pursue its dynamic development"; and
- 2) By replacing paragraph (d) in the motion by the following:

"Modernizing and standardizing the grading of pure Maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade which would explain more clearly to the consumer the classification and the grading system;"

Hon. Bob Runciman: Honourable senators, as a senator from Ontario's main maple syrup producing region, I am pleased to support Senator Raine's motion to modernize and standardize regulations governing maple syrup. I know many of the men and women who invest thousands of dollars in their operations, all for a few weeks of back-breaking, around-the-clock labour every March and April. They are at the mercy of the weather and they hope for cold nights and warm days in that brief window when winter turns to spring.

At the best of times, it is a risky proposition. If the weather is not just right, the sap does not run. In 1998, syrup producers in my area saw their sugar bushes devastated by the great ice storm. Many were forced to buy additional property to make continued production economically feasible. I am told by producers that

even today, 14 years later, trees continue to die as a result of the damage and stress they encountered during that ice storm. One cannot replace those trees overnight. A sugar maple tree has to grow for at least 40 years before it is big enough to be tapped, and that same tree, carefully tended, can then produce sap every spring for up to a century.

Clearly, due to the very nature of their industry, maple syrup producers have always needed to have one eye on the future. It is not surprising then that the industry wants to be better prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Drawing on extensive consultations, the International Maple Syrup Institute has proposed common-sense changes to enhance the industry. These changes, which would include the introduction of North American standards for maple syrup, require the support of all relevant jurisdictions, including the Government of Canada.

I wholeheartedly agree that the Senate should call upon the government to amend the federal Maple Products Regulations in accordance with the institute's recommendations. It is clear that in this industry traditions do not and must not stand still. The bucket, spouts and cauldrons of yesteryear have long given way to tubing systems, vacuum pumps and sophisticated evaporators, and Canada's maple syrup industry knows it must continue evolving to maintain and build on its current achievements.

Honourable senators, the need for regulatory reform is driven by competition, but not against other maple syrup producers. The competitive pressures the industry faces come from producers of other cheaper types of sweeteners. Maple syrup producers have a common interest in gaining market share against these competitors. There is, remarkably enough, no uniform definition accepted around the world for pure maple syrup. That means other natural and artificial sweeteners can add small amounts of maple syrup to their own ingredients and legitimately claim that it contains pure maple syrup. It also means that producers of pure maple syrup cannot really distinguish their product from their competitors.

Therefore, as the first order of business, the industry wants the adoption of a uniform definition of what constitutes pure maple syrup. This would make it easier for the consumers, producers, packers, retailers and regulators to identify this iconic product; and it would enable the maple syrup industry to trumpet the purity of its product over other common sweeteners. The changes would also standardize labelling across jurisdictions. All pure maple syrup would simply become grade A.

To complement the new grading system, the industry wants to introduce four colour classes. I have been told by a maple syrup producer that the cost to implement this change is negligible, just a few new labels, but the benefits could be significant.

These changes are a way to protect the industry and to set the stage for its future growth. Canada, as the world's leading producer of maple syrup, is a key player. The opportunity to demonstrate our country's leadership resides right here in this chamber. By approving the tabled motion, the Senate would call on the government to amend the Maple Products Regulations. This, of course, would be the first step toward modernizing and standardizing federal laws, a first step towards enabling our maple syrup industry to embrace the future.

Therefore, I urge all honourable senators to join with me in supporting the motion. Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker: Are honourable senators ready for the question?

(On motion of Senator Mockler, debate adjourned.)

MENTAL HEALTH, ILLNESS AND ADDICTION SERVICES IN CANADA

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Hubley, calling the attention of the Senate to the 5th anniversary of the tabling of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology's report: *Out of the Shadows at Last: Transforming Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction Services in Canada*.

Hon. Judith Seidman: Honourable senators, in May 2006 the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology produced a report that would change the face of mental health in Canada. Led by the Honourable Michael Kirby and the Honourable Wilbert Keon, the committee began their work after receiving an order of reference in October 2004. An extract from the *Journals of the Senate* of Thursday, October 7, 2004, states that the committee "be authorized to examine and report on issues arising from" an earlier 2002 report on the state of the health care system in Canada. The reference further states:

In particular, the committee shall be authorized to examine issues concerning mental health and mental illness.

This 484-page report, with its additional 57 pages of appendices, covers enormous ground. Each chapter sheds light on the impact of mental illness in Canada. The subjective voices of individuals and families and their heartrending stories are highlighted. Service organization and delivery that looks to an integrated continuum of care with an emphasis on primary care is examined. An entire chapter is devoted to an underfunded and fragmented child and youth system where a critical shortage of mental health professionals results in very late interventions or none at all.

In addition, research and knowledge transfer are identified as necessary for the development of specialized treatment programs and support services for seniors who are too often warehoused because they suffer the double whammy of being both aged and mentally ill. The human and economic impact of mental illness in the workplace is examined along with the all-important opportunities for self-help and peer support. The report includes so much more — research, ethics, privacy, mental health promotion, and mental illness prevention strategies.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of this Senate report was the timely response to the committee's concern that the mental health sector had been so neglected over decades. Recommended was

that there should be a mechanism to ensure leadership in undertaking certain critical tasks at a national level to maintain a needed focus on mental health issues. That mechanism was the proposed Canadian Mental Health Commission.

• (1500)

The guiding principles for this commission were that it be an independent, not-for-profit organization at arm's length from both governments and all existing mental health stakeholder organizations; that it make those living with mental illness and their families the central focus of its activities; that it build on and complement initiatives already under way throughout Canada; that it establish partnerships all along the spectrum of existing national and international mental health agencies and stakeholders; that it emphasize evidence-based mental health policies and methods of service delivery; and that it evaluate, assess and report on its own activities.

The mandate of the commission is to act as facilitator, enabler and supporter of a national approach to mental health issues. It is the catalyst for reform and a national focal point for objective, evidence-based information. It is designed to increase mental health literacy in Canada and to diminish the stigma and the discrimination faced by Canadians living with mental illness and their families.

Why have I been so descriptive in detailing the principles and mission of the Mental Health Commission? Because it demonstrates the enormous role it was meant to play in changing the overall mental health landscape in Canada and in transforming the system into one that is truly of the 21st century. We look forward to the spring of this year when the commission will release the results of its work and make recommendations for the future on an agenda so critically important to all Canadians.

One of the first initiatives of Prime Minister Harper, upon winning the election in 2006, was to create the Mental Health Commission of Canada. In so doing, this government has demonstrated its priorities. Improving the quality of life of Canadians who live with mental illness and the families who support them is critical. This government has shown leadership in its will to change the archaic paradigm from one that has allowed confusion, misdirection and discrimination to one that will bring clarity, evidence-based direction and affirmation of a new, compassionate reality.

When establishing the Mental Health Commission of Canada in 2007, the Harper government dedicated an initial \$110 million in funding over 10 years. In the budget of 2008, an additional \$110 million was invested to research issues of mental health and homelessness in Canada over a five-year period.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research have received over \$234 million since 2006 towards their efforts in researching mental health issues and addiction in Canada. In addition, many major initiatives across the country are supported through the National Anti-Drug Strategy, the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, the Aboriginal Head Start program, the Community Action Program for Children, the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, The Family Violence Initiative, the Brighter Futures Initiative, the Building Healthy Communities Initiative and the Federal Elder Abuse Initiative. While some of these programs are not focused directly on mental health or addiction, all of them produce benefits for the mental health of Canadians.

For example, the Federal Elder Abuse Initiative works to prevent the abuse of vulnerable elders. As a partner in the Federal Elder Abuse Initiative, Justice Canada funds research on elder abuse awareness, reporting and the legal aspects of elder abuse. In addition, Justice Canada raises awareness of the risks of fraud by producing materials for seniors. Justice Canada also funds public legal education and information organizations working on the legal aspects of elder abuse.

The National Anti-Drug Strategy is a multi-pronged attack on substance addiction in Canada that focuses on prevention, treatment and legal enforcement. Some \$30 million have been dedicated to the prevention action plan, which provides information on drug use directly to parents, educators and health professionals. Local, school-based awareness and prevention strategies have been developed and existing community drug use programs have been refocused and strengthened. The national prevention action plan has released a public awareness campaign called DrugsNot4Me, which reaches out to teens and opens a dialogue about illicit drug use.

In addition, the treatment action plan has been provided with \$100 million in funding for drug treatment programs for First Nations and Inuit, for young offenders and for research to develop new treatment models. As a result, the RCMP have the possibility of referring youth with drug related problems to treatment programs where they receive the assistance necessary to help them overcome the challenge of addiction.

The third plank of the National Anti-Drug Strategy, known as the Enforcement Action Plan, gives assistance to enforcement agencies to crack down on marijuana grow ops, drug labs and distribution networks across the country. Targeted funding has been provided to the RCMP to enable dedicated anti-drug squads to investigate organizations that produce and distribute dangerous drugs.

The ability of Canadian law enforcement agencies to work with their American counterparts in combating the flow of money and illicit drugs has also been improved.

The Public Prosecution Service of Canada has been given additional funding to provide legal advice to law enforcement agencies during investigations so that those involved in the production and distribution of illegal drugs can be penalized to the full extent of the law. All in all, \$102 million has been invested to support these specific efforts which will help punish those who profit from the misery of addiction.

In June of last year, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada announced a new, voluntary standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace. New guidelines will be provided to employers across the country as a model of best practices. It is hoped these will lead to measurable improvements in workplace mental health. Canada is the first country to develop such a set of standards. The rationale is to highlight psychological health as an integral part of workplace health and safety. With the investment of \$320,000, this project will help remove some of the barriers that Canadians with mental illness face in the workplace.

The peer project, launched by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, helps enhance the public's ability to provide support and understanding for friends, family and colleagues who suffer from mental illness. This program is founded on the belief that

those who live with mental illness are valuable teachers and advocates. They are best suited to share experiences and offer advice to those in similar situations.

Another important project overseen by the Mental Health Commission of Canada aims to train people in mental health first aid. This emphasis on early intervention trains human resources managers to identify signs and symptoms of potential mental health problems in the workplace and facilitate referrals to health professionals when appropriate.

Honourable senators, in the past the Senate has played a leadership role as a champion of mental health in Canada. It is

part of a great legacy, and every one of us in this chamber should be proud of this history.

Now it is our job to uphold the principles of this report. In honour of its legacy, let us come together as we commemorate the fifth anniversary of *Out of the Shadows at Last*, and let us remember that we have more work to do and more promises to keep.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Losier-Cool, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, February 9, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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SENATE



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CANADA

DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION

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41st PARLIAMENT

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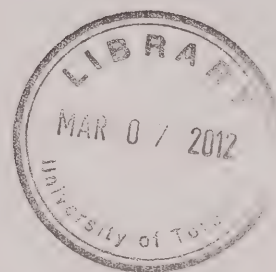
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, February 9, 2012



The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Thursday, February 9, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

THE LATE HONOURABLE FRED J. DICKSON

SILENT TRIBUTE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is with deep regret that I convey to you the news that the Honourable Senator Fred Dickson has passed away. There will be an opportunity for us to pay tribute at a later time.

I will take the liberty of sending deepest condolences to the family on behalf of the Senate and all senators.

Honourable senators, I would ask that you rise and join with me in a minute of silent tribute.

Honourable senators then stood in silent tribute.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, out of respect for our deceased colleague Senator Dickson, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), I move:

That, out of respect for the Honourable Senator Dickson, the Senate do now adjourn until Tuesday, February 14, 2012, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 14, 2012, at 2 p.m.)

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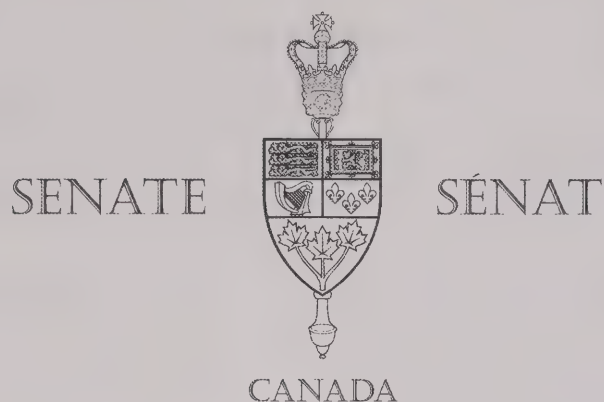
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1st SESSION

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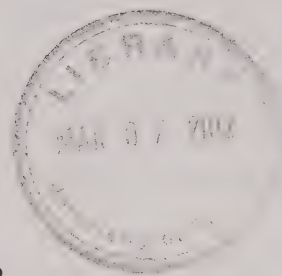
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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)



Tuesday, February 14, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 14, 2012

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

TRIBUTES

THE LATE HONOURABLE FRED J. DICKSON

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, it is with a heavy heart and much sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to one of the kindest and most sincere gentlemen I have ever had the privilege of knowing, the late Honourable Senator Fred Dickson.

Both Senator Cowan and I were instructed by Senator Dickson that he did not want a lot of tributes. We are respecting his wishes, but we did agree that we could not let the moment pass without acknowledging Fred's passing and his contribution.

I first met Fred Dickson back in the Stanfield days in the early 1970s. When I did meet him I soon realized that there was no greater champion of Atlantic Canada and no more loyal Conservative who did every conceivable job on behalf of the people of Atlantic Canada, particularly Nova Scotia, and of course the Conservative Party. His motto was, and I can remember him saying to me at one point, "You do what has to be done." If that is not typical of what Fred would say, I do not know what is.

A lifelong Nova Scotian, born and raised in Glace Bay, Fred passionately believed that Atlantic Canada could prosper to enjoy a dynamic and stable economy. In addition to over 40 years of practising law, he played an instrumental advisory role during many milestones for his home province of Nova Scotia and the Atlantic provinces, including the Atlantic Accord and the building of the Confederation Bridge, linking Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

Fred wholeheartedly believed in Canada's Maritime provinces, and he showed unwavering dedication to issues and concerns of his fellow Nova Scotians. All of his work in that regard is truly admirable.

In fact, during his time in the Senate, as before, Fred was a strong advocate for improved energy infrastructure in Atlantic Canada. His work and the benefits for Nova Scotia are well documented. Fred continued that work here in the Senate on the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources.

Until his final days, Fred also worked continuously on sustainability of Canada's health care system. As a matter of fact, during one of the ceremonies in the Senate I happened to sit

in Fred's desk. Underneath the desktop was the Kirby-LeBreton report, the Senate report on health care, which I noticed he had read very carefully because it was dog-eared.

The energy issue and the health issue were very important to Fred. I would hope, honourable senators, that his good work on both of these fronts, about which he was so passionate, will be continued here in his name in the upper chamber.

As I mentioned earlier, Fred was actively involved in both the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and the Conservative Party of Canada. Much like his dedication to Atlantic Canada, he was a staunch Conservative committed to working in the best interests of Nova Scotians, Maritimers and Canadians.

The halls of Parliament and certainly the Senate Chamber will be a little less bright without Fred's warm smile and kind heart. On behalf of all my colleagues here in the Senate of Canada, I wish to extend our most heartfelt and sincere condolences to Fred's wife Kaye, his children Ian, Colin and Kathryn, and their entire family.

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I want to join Senator LeBreton in paying tribute to my good friend and our late colleague, Senator Fred Dickson.

Shakespeare wrote the following:

And do as adversaries do in law,
Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

Honourable senators, that is good advice for all of us in this place.

Senator Dickson and I regularly found ourselves on opposite sides; in our law practices in Halifax, in election campaigns in Nova Scotia, and most recently here in the Senate. We strove mightily for our clients and for our causes, but we always ate, drank and especially talked as friends.

Bill Casey, the former MP for Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley, got it right. He said that Senator Dickson was "the ultimate gentleman in everything he did."

Fred was deeply, passionately committed to Nova Scotia, to Canada, to the Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia and to the Conservative Party of Canada. He understood and loved politics, not as an end in itself but because of what politics could do and could achieve for his province and for his country. He believed, as I do, that there is a positive role for government to play in people's lives.

Fred Dickson achieved a great deal, as Senator LeBreton has said. He was a key player in Canada-Nova Scotia offshore oil and gas agreements in the 1980s. He was deeply involved as an adviser

to the federal government in the building of the Confederation Bridge, linking New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island — quite fitting I think because he was indeed exceedingly good at building bridges of all kinds throughout his life.

He was a strong and long-standing supporter of former premier, and then senator, John Buchanan. They knew one another from Cape Breton, where they both grew up, and in fact they started a law firm together in the 1960s, which Senator Oliver would remember as well as I do.

Senator Dickson went on to manage all of Premier Buchanan's election campaigns, to my chagrin, since I was actively working to elect a Liberal government. His efforts were much more successful than mine, and he helped to elect John Buchanan Premier of Nova Scotia four times in a row. I did not like the result, but I always admired Fred's skill. Who else could run a fourth campaign using the slogan "John Buchanan and the New PCs?" It worked.

• (1410)

Honourable senators, he ran elections the way he did everything, with integrity and an overarching, absolute respect for the democratic process. He had high standards as to how things should and should not be done, and he held true to them.

He had too short a time here in the Senate — just three years — and he was battling cancer the whole time. However, his dedication to public service never flagged. He was a member of our National Finance Committee when it was studying the 900-page omnibus budget bill in 2010. The committee sat well into the summer, in long, marathon hearing days. Fred Dickson was there, actively studying the bill and listening to and weighing the testimony of every witness.

An issue that he was particularly devoted to was health care. His son Ian described how active his father was right to the end advocating for improvements to our health care system. Indeed, just a few days before he died, his son came to the hospital to find his father on the telephone with someone in the Prime Minister's office, pressing for better home care options for those in palliative care. As Ian said, "He thought people should have a choice, and how much better it would be if you could pass peacefully at home." Even cancer was not going to stop Fred Dickson from arguing for a better way for others.

Fred Dickson was a good friend, a fine Nova Scotian, and a great Canadian. I liked looking across the aisle and seeing him there — as usual, on the opposite side — working hard for what he believed in but never losing perspective and never sacrificing friendship. He will be truly missed. On behalf of all senators on this side, I join Senator LeBreton in expressing our deep condolences to Kaye, to his children and to his grandchildren.

OCEAN RANGER DISASTER

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Elizabeth (Beth) Marshall: Honourable senators, 30 years ago tomorrow, February 15, 1982, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians witnessed the worst offshore drilling accident in

Canadian history, with the loss of 84 lives. While undertaking exploratory drilling near the Hibernia oil field, 170 nautical miles east of St. John's, the *Ocean Ranger*, the Titanic of semi-submersible oil rigs, capsized and sank in a severe weather storm. All 84 crew men, including 56 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, were lost. It was Canada's worst maritime disaster since the Second World War, leaving the entire population of Newfoundland and Labrador shattered to its core.

The *Ocean Ranger* was a massive oil rig, touted as unsinkable and able to drill in areas too dangerous for other rigs. On Sunday, February 14, 1982, an intense storm developed south of Newfoundland and made a path toward the Grand Banks. By sunset that day, winds had gusted to 90 knots, and seas were building rapidly. Around 7 p.m., with seas reaching over 30 metres high, the *Ocean Ranger* reported to its St. John's shore base an exceptionally huge wave. Shortly after that, it reported that the giant wave crashed over the rig, smashing a porthole in the ballast control room. At 1:30 a.m. on February 15, the *Ocean Ranger* signalled that it was sending its crew to lifeboats. That was the last time anyone heard from them.

Two hours later, at 3:38 a.m., the Coast Guard and other rescuers watched their radars as the *Ocean Ranger* disappeared. Despite every possible effort, all rescue attempts failed, and all crew members on the *Ocean Ranger* perished. A permanent monument to those who died was erected on the grounds of the Confederation Building in St. John's, the seat of the provincial government. Every anniversary, a ceremony takes place there to remember all those who lost their lives in that terrible disaster of February 15, 1982.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, family violence can affect anyone. It pays no attention to age, gender, ethnic origin or socio-economic status. It comes in many forms, from harassment to verbal abuse to threats, to injury to pets, to physical abuse. The most recent Canadian statistics show that an estimated 6 per cent of women and men in a current or previous spousal relationship experienced spousal violence during the previous five years. About 20 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men also reported being victimized by a former partner.

In my home province of Prince Edward Island, the primary emergency shelter for abused women and their children, Anderson House, admitted 58 women and 32 children between April 1, 2010, and March 31, 2011. Almost 60 per cent of these women received emergency shelter at Anderson House for the first time.

This week is Family Violence Prevention Week in my province. Islanders are coming together to create greater awareness of this serious issue, and to learn how to prevent and to stop family violence around them. The P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women has launched the "Islanders Stand With Us" poster campaign. Islanders have been invited to submit photos of themselves, which are published on a poster. Each poster says, "I stand with you to end violence against women and children." Wednesday, February 15, is Wear Purple Day, when all Islanders are asked to wear purple to remember victims of violence and their families. Silent Walks Against Violence are being held in communities across the province throughout the week.

In 1995, the province developed a five-year family violence prevention strategy. We appointed a working committee, the Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention, made up of community and government officials. I am pleased that the Action Committee remains a driving force in the fight against family violence on Prince Edward Island. I am told that the model has been duplicated in some other provinces. In fact, the Premier's Action Committee is presenting town hall meetings this week to provide information for Islanders on how to respond to and help prevent violence in our communities.

Honourable senators, family violence occurs every day, in communities large and small across the country. I would like to commend all those who assist and support victims of violence and who work toward the elimination of family violence. We must do everything in our power to help those who live with violence within their homes and families and stand with them to ensure an end to family violence.

SCOUTS CANADA

Hon. Consiglio Di Nino: Honourable senators, for over 100 years, tens of thousands of Canadian men and women have committed themselves to serving the youth of our country through Boy Scouts of Canada and, more recently, the new co-ed Scouts Canada.

Today is Scouts Canada Day on the Hill. You will have seen a lot of them running around and doing their thing, some of them visiting your offices. Scouts of all ages are meeting members of both houses to remind us of the many benefits the organization has provided and continues to provide to Canadian youth, their families and our communities. They are joined by a number of adult volunteers, without whom Scouts would not exist. Volunteers drive the organization, and it is them I wish to highlight in my brief remarks today.

Scouts Canada has influenced all walks of Canadian life. From Scouts have come some of this country's most successful corporate and business leaders, accomplished professionals in all disciplines, sports legends, and political leaders, as well as distinguished Canadians in all other endeavours. The unsung heroes in this tale are the men and women who dedicate a large part of their lives to building confidence, character and determination in our youth.

Honourable senators, please join me in extending our thanks and gratitude to all of Scouts Canada volunteers across our nation, for they have played an important role in developing Canada's leaders. Their nurturing, their mentorship, and their sound counsel have indeed helped to make Canada a tolerant, compassionate and successful nation, envied by the world. I invite all colleagues to a Scouts Canada reception this evening at 5:30 p.m. until probably after 8 o'clock in room 160S, to personally extend your thanks and gratitude to many of the volunteers who will be there today.

[Translation]

Hon. Dennis Dawson: Honourable senators, today we are welcoming members of Scouts Canada and the Association des scouts du Canada. These two organizations constitute the largest

youth movement in Canada. The scouting movement was founded on values like commitment and helping one another. Its mission is to help young people become more responsible, independent, charitable, mature and engaged.

• (1420)

Today, the Association des scouts du Canada has over 17,000 francophone Canadian members from coast to coast to coast.

Created in 1907 by Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the Scout movement now has over 100,000 members in Canada.

Many of you are invited and have already received your invitation, but I would like to reiterate Senators Di Nino's invitation for everyone to join us at 5:30 p.m. for a reception to pay tribute to them.

[English]

NEW BRUNSWICK HERITAGE WEEK

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: Honourable senators, this week is New Brunswick Heritage Week. Forgive me if I am prejudiced, but I believe that New Brunswick is the most beautiful province in Canada, having a rich heritage that began long before Confederation. For instance, Chaleur Bay in northern New Brunswick still carries the name that Jacques Cartier gave it in 1534. When Cartier arrived, the land was already peopled by the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet nations. Our first European settlement was established by Samuel de Champlain on Saint Croix Island in 1604. Sadly, these first settlers were not prepared for the privations of the Canadian climate and many died from cold and hunger.

[Translation]

The Acadian settlers would be much more successful.

[English]

They established farms built on land reclaimed from wetlands with a series of dikes.

[Translation]

Many of these dikes can still be seen today in the Tantramar Marshes.

[English]

With its rich forests, bountiful farmland and calm harbours, New Brunswick prospered. Many of our towns were established well before the province was officially founded in 1784. There is a great sense of history in all our towns; many are very old with rich histories.

This year, Sackville is celebrating its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary. Sackville was a thriving town when Washington existed only on paper. Over the years, the people of Sackville were involved in events that shaped Canada's history.

In 1776, during the American Revolution, a local militia unit repelled a force of American invaders at Fort Cumberland. Christopher Harper, an ancestor of our Prime Minister, was part of that defending militia. Without these militiamen, Nova Scotia, which included New Brunswick, might have become the fourteenth colony of the United States.

Sackville was a thriving shipbuilding port for many years. Today it is home to Mount Allison University and was named the Cultural Capital of Canada in 2008.

Many notable people have called Sackville home, and I will name a few: Grace Lockhart, the first woman in Canada to receive a university degree, from Mount Allison University; John Peters Humphrey, author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; George Stanley, who designed the Canadian flag, and our honoured Canadian artist, Alex Colville.

This year, Sackville will host a year-long birthday celebration, and I invite all honourable senators to come and share the fun.

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST THE USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, when a sergeant and his unit entered a village that, less than an hour before, had been completely destroyed by a rebel faction, they found that the chapel was still intact and that people were inside. After forcing the door open, they estimated that about a hundred people were still alive. The sergeant contacted my headquarters requesting transport to secure the group. At that moment, from the edge of the village, 30 or so boys and girls, 9 to 16 years old, opened fire on the sergeant, his unit and the people they were protecting. As they were trying to protect themselves, another group of about 20 girls around the same age, some of them pregnant, emerged from the other edge of the village. They were being used as a human shield. Behind them, more boys and girls, 8 to 16 years old, opened fire on the sergeant, his unit and the people they were protecting.

What was the sergeant to do? What order should he have given? Should he have ordered his soldiers to kill the children who were killing, who had been taken from their families, taken from their schools, forced to take drugs, brainwashed by unbelievably irresponsible adults, sexually abused and used as weapons of war? Is that the only solution?

That is why Canada led the way to including children's rights in the protocol to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict.

On February 12, we saluted the efforts of over 150 countries around the world to stop the other 30 countries that use over 250,000 children as child soldiers, children as young as seven or eight.

I would like to read a short excerpt from the convention:

[English]

The protocol establishes an obligation upon parties to take all feasible measures to prevent the direct participation in hostilities by individuals under the age of 18. It prohibits

the compulsory recruitment of persons under the age of 18 into the armed forces and also obliges parties to raise the minimum age of voluntary recruitment of persons into the armed forces above the age set by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It further requires parties to establish safeguards relative to the voluntary recruitment of individuals under the age of 18. The protocol also prescribes the recruitment of persons under the age of 18 years by armed groups that are distinct from armed forces of a state. Finally, the protocol sets forth an obligation upon parties to report to the committees on human rights and child abuse and its implementation.

Not only have we seen the threat of child soldiers, but now our forces are also facing the threat of child pirates. Clearly over 60 per cent of the pirates now being employed in the world are children or youths well under the age of 15, whom our forces are faced to confront with lethal force.

It is a requirement for us to argue to advance the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and to work not only at sea to try to stop these youth from being used as child pirates, but also to go to the nations that use them and bring those subversive elements before the International Criminal Court in order to stop this impunity.

OCEAN RANGER DISASTER

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Norman E. Doyle: Honourable senators, it is indeed an honour and a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to stand here today and deliver my first few remarks in the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Doyle: It is also an honour to be here among so many distinguished people — people who have made their own unique contributions to the well-being of their communities, their provinces and their country.

I want to take a moment to thank a number of people who have helped in the last few weeks to make my transition from private to public life a relatively painless event. First of all, I want to thank the Prime Minister for the appointment. I must say that I have always had a great deal of faith in his good judgment. I want to thank the Leader of the Government in the Senate, the Honourable Marjory LeBreton, for her guidance and direction. I want to thank Senator Marshall, the Government Whip, who has been generous with her time and of course my colleagues from Newfoundland and Labrador, Senator Cochrane and Senator Manning, who have been very helpful. Senator Cochrane, thank you for sponsoring me.

Honourable senators, there are many more people I should mention, however, I, like my colleague from Newfoundland and Labrador, must draw attention once more to the very important anniversary that will live forever in the hearts and minds of all Newfoundlanders and indeed all Canadians.

Tomorrow, February 15, will mark the date of one of the greatest ocean-going tragedies in the history of our province: the sinking of the *Ocean Ranger*. Every year at about this time, we remember these brave workers as they tried to launch lifeboats into the face of a vicious 190-kilometre wind and in 65-foot seas from the deck of an oil rig that was the height of a 35-storey building.

• (1430)

This tragedy is forever fixed in my memory for a number of reasons, but especially because of where I was working on that bleak, dark morning — in Premier Brian Peckford's office, waiting for the official word on the fate of the *Ocean Ranger* to be made manifest. In the final analysis, a broken porthole window, which allowed water to get into the *Ocean Ranger* ballast control panel, would send the largest oil rig in the world, with 84 of its workers, to the bottom of the sea on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

Tomorrow, February 15, we will see many sorrow-filled ceremonies held back home in many of our churches and town halls, marking this sad anniversary. It has been 30 years since that terrible event occurred; however, time can never erase the sorrow that Newfoundlanders, and indeed all Canadians, feel for the families who know only too well how desperately weak we really are when confronted with the unbelievable power of the raging sea.

Again, honourable senators, we send our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of these 84 brave men who will remain forever in our memory.

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Mr. Yusuf Mohamed Ismail, the Somali Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council and Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva. He and his colleagues are here in our gallery and are guests of the Honourable Senator Meredith.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PARLAMERICAS

BILATERAL VISIT TO THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC
OF VENEZUELA, NOVEMBER 13-18, 2011—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. Pierrette Ringuette: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canadian section of

ParlAmericas respecting its participation in the bilateral visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on November 13 to 18, 2011.

[English]

CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS,
MARCH 1-2, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the U.S. Congressional Meetings, held in Washington, D.C., United States of America, from March 1 to 2, 2011.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOUTHEASTERN
UNITED STATES-CANADIAN PROVINCES ALLIANCE,
JUNE 12-14, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the Fourth Annual Conference of the Southeastern United States-Canadian Provinces Alliance, held in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, from June 12 to 14, 2011.

WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL
MEETING, JUNE 29-JULY 1, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group to the Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting, held in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, United States of America, from June 29 to July 1, 2011.

QUESTION PERIOD

NATIONAL DEFENCE

F-35 AIRCRAFT PURCHASE

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and it relates to the F-35 aircraft program.

The Joint Strike Fighter program has suffered further setbacks this week. The Pentagon has suggested a \$1.6 billion cut to their purchases in the next fiscal year. It has also advised that the United States should cut purchases by 2 this year, 13 the next year, and delaying the purchase of 179 until post-2017.

Further, the British have delayed a decision on even purchasing the jet until 2015, and reports are that they will cut their original order from 140 to 40. The Turks have halved their original order. Australia has rescheduled its original purchase of the 14 aircraft. The Dutch have put off making a decision on their purchase until after 2015. The Italians have signalled a cut in their original purchase of 131. The speculation is that this could now be as low as 38 units. Norway has yet to make a decision on their order.

Honourable senators, the price of these aircraft is literally rising daily.

During the last election campaign, Mr. Harper claimed that he had in writing the fact that Canada would pay the lowest price, at \$75 million per airplane. Would the Leader of the Government in the Senate please table that letter in the Senate?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, first, it is important to point out that the Royal Canadian Air Force plays an important role in protecting our sovereignty and defending our interests at home and abroad. We do have obligations to our partners.

The other important thing to point out is that Canada's CF-18s are nearing the end of their usable lives, and it is the duty of the government to ensure that Canada's air force is properly equipped for the job we ask of them.

With regard to the honourable senator putting on the record the situation of other countries in the world, that is all public knowledge. We, as a government, as well as the Associate Minister of National Defence and the Minister of National Defence, are always involved in discussions with our allies and partners in the multinational Joint Strike Fighter Program. As I believe Senator Moore is aware, Minister Fantino is planning to host a meeting with several of Canada's partners. This will provide an opportunity for Canada and its partners to receive an update on the program's progress to date.

With regard to the honourable senator's specific request that I table a letter, I do not know whether I am in a position to do so. I will simply take note of that request and get back to Senator Moore.

Senator Moore: Honourable senators, I am struggling with how to respond. In the face of all that is going on, and in the face of this program, there is uncertainty as to the delivery date. The price is unknown. The Pentagon now says it will be \$156 million per airplane. It is clear that Lockheed is developing the plane as it is trying to produce it. It may not even suit Canada's needs. How does the leader justify continuing with this purchase plan in the face of those obstacles?

Senator LeBreton: That is Senator Moore's opinion, that they may not suit Canada's needs. The fact is that at this moment there are F-35s flying, and there are more coming off the production line this year. As these planes are rolling off production lines, they are going through testing. Areas needing improvement are being identified and addressed. All of this is taking place long before Canada takes delivery of any of these aircraft.

I believe, honourable senators, the government feels that when the F-35 replaces the CF-18 years from now, it will be a mature, tested aircraft. The fact of the matter is, as I mentioned, Minister Fantino, the Associate Minister of National Defence, is meeting shortly with our partners. Collectively they are staying on top of the developments with regard to this aircraft. Currently, Canadian companies are involved in the development of this aircraft, and these are important jobs to Canadians.

• (1440)

Senator Moore: *Aviation Week*, a trade journal out of Washington, D.C., reported last Wednesday that a sizable amount of the increased costs of this airplane has been attributed to China's cyber-theft of technology.

Honourable senators, this has come to the attention of Lockheed Martin, and they have admitted that six of the subcontractors working on the program were hijacked and left "totally compromised."

The journal reports:

... Chinese hackers actually sat in on what were supposed to have been secure, online program-progress conferences, the officials say.

Has the Department of National Defence been briefed on these developments? Has cabinet been made aware of this? Is there any concern at all regarding our national security in light of these compromises?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I cannot comment specifically on an article that appeared in an aviation magazine. I will take the question as notice.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS—SECURITY

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Last week Mr. Harper was in China dealing on our natural resources.

Senator Mitchell: Finally. It is about time.

Senator Moore: He was following the team Chrétien example, which is commendable.

What I would like to know is, while we were beating up the Chinese with regard to their human rights record, did Mr. Harper raise the matter of the Chinese hacking into security programs in the United States?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The Prime Minister was indeed in China. I think all reports and evidence indicate it was a very successful trip. I dare say that it stands light years ahead of the trips Mr. Chrétien made. I would point out to honourable senators that the trade figures between Canada and China actually fell after the trips that Mr. Chrétien took.

In any event, honourable senators, as I was here, I was not privy to the discussions that the Prime Minister, government ministers and government officials had with Chinese officials. I cannot answer that question, but I will take it as notice.

Senator Moore: The leader is a member of cabinet. Was she aware of these breaches of security by the Chinese?

Senator LeBreton: As honourable senators would know, as a member of cabinet, I cannot and would not reveal anything that was discussed at the cabinet table.

Senator Moore: In view of the fact that it deals directly with the economy of Canada — it is driving up the cost of these aircraft, which are suspect at best — the government is doing this at the same time it will cut Old Age Security. What are the government's priorities? Did the Prime Minister know about these hacking occurrences before he went to China, and did he raise them while he was there?

Senator LeBreton: First, the honourable senator takes things in isolation. He and Kevin Page must be singing from the same hymn book.

The fact of the matter is the government's commitment to the Canadian electorate is jobs and the economy. Everything the government does is related to jobs and the economy.

With regard to the Old Age Security, the government will take measures to ensure that our Old Age Security is sustainable in the long term while not affecting people who are presently receiving it or about to receive it.

I cannot answer questions about personal meetings the Prime Minister had.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OLD AGE SECURITY PENSION

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, yesterday I was at a meeting that involved experts on pensions and services for seniors. There were advocacy groups there, health care providers, occupational therapists and economists, just to mention a few.

I also heard from hundreds of everyday Canadians who were joining in online in a webcast. They all agreed that cutting the OAS is unnecessary and that cutting Old Age Security today or in the future hurts low-income people the most.

The fact is that more than half of the seniors on OAS make less than \$25,000 per year. When Canadians are worried about the growing gap between the rich and the poor, why is this government insisting that these changes are needed?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, why does Senator Eggleton insist on alarming senior citizens when he knows full well that the

intentions of the government regarding the Old Age Security system are in fact to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Old Age Security? The government will then be in the position, now and in the future, to ensure the OAS is available for seniors.

Honourable senators, Senator Eggleton knows full well — and I hope this has been properly communicated — that people presently on Old Age Security and people about to receive Old Age Security will not be affected.

I would urge the honourable senator to await the final decision of the government before he runs off scaremongering senior citizens.

Senator Eggleton: I am sorry, I did not go to Davos and give a speech about making a change in this, leaving it very uncertain as to why this change was necessary when experts say it is not or what the specifics of the changes are. This has many people upset. Poll after poll is showing they are upset, not because of what anyone on this side is saying, but simply because of what the Prime Minister has been saying.

It may not affect current people, but it will ultimately affect a lot of people, according to Mr. Flaherty's timetable. A lot of them are low-income people. A lot of them are in labour jobs, a very physical kind of activity, which not everyone will be able to extend to between 65 and 67 years in the workforce. It is the low-income people I am particularly concerned about here, and the government does not appear to be.

In terms of experts, now the Parliamentary Budget Officer has weighed in on this and has indicated, similarly to the chief actuary and other experts, that this has really not changed. He says that, relative to the size of the economy, the assumption that average benefits are indexed to inflation results in an increase in the cost of the program of only 0.8 percentage points of GDP from current time to 2031. Of course, after that it would fall off in any event. The evidence is not there.

Why does the government not stop the fear-mongering and tell people they will not do it because they do not need to?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, for every person who says it is not a problem, I could provide 10 who say it is.

Incidentally, the honourable senator's own Paul Martin anticipated this in the 1990s and obviously backed away from it. Now the government is confronted with a situation where by 2030 Canada will have twice as many retirees supported by half as many working Canadians. On its current path, Old Age Security will become unsustainable without changes. Even Paul Martin recognized that, even though he backed away from it. That is a dangerous course of action. I do not think it is an action that any responsible government would take.

The goal of the government, which we are committed to, is protecting retirement income for today's seniors, for people about to retire and for future generations. We are simply working on a plan to make our Old Age Security system sustainable over the long term. It is the responsible thing to do; it is called leadership.

Senator Eggleton: The plan was sustainable back in Paul Martin's day, since the leader raised his name. What was not sustainable at the time was the Canada Pension Plan. That, in fact, was rectified.

The OAS is a different plan, and the numbers are not the same. The experts say, in fact, it is sustainable.

Senator LeBreton: Actually, it was both, honourable senators, and Senator Eggleton knows that. It was not only the Canada Pension Plan, which is now on strong financial footing.

To give credit where credit is due, the Martin government took the right decisions with regard to CPP, but we are not talking about CPP. Mr. Martin also foresaw the difficulty with the Old Age Security.

• (1450)

We are simply saying that, in order to ensure that our Old Age Security system is on sound footing and is sustainable well into the future, actions have to be taken now. With that said, it has absolutely nothing to do with people who are presently receiving the Old Age Security or people who are about to receive it.

Senator Eggleton: One final question: Will the leader advocate with her colleagues that people of low income be protected, including the poor — the people who will in fact suffer the most from this — people who cannot go to the 67-years-of-age mark or need this kind of assistance, the GIS and the other things that go with it, many of whom are women? Will the leader advocate for them in terms of the final conditions of this change?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I did not hear any accolades from the honourable senator's side as we have been advocating them for six years.

Certainly single seniors and people with limited or no income have benefited greatly from the policies of our government, but I will put them on the record again.

Budget 2011, just last year, enhanced the Guaranteed Income Supplement with a top-up of an extra \$600 for low-income senior singles and an extra \$840 for low-income senior couples, improving financial security for over 700,000 seniors in 2012, which happens to be the year we are presently in. It was the largest increase in the GIS in 25 years.

The budget extended the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers to support training and employment programs. Over 10,000 seniors have been helped since 2007.

The budget also increased funding for the New Horizons for Seniors Program, which was something I was involved in when I was Minister of State (Seniors), building on the results of our government for seniors since 2006. I will list a few more.

We have twice increased the age credit, providing tax savings to 2.2 million seniors. Pension income-splitting was introduced in 2007. We increased the age limit for RRSPPs from 69 to 71, and 85,000 seniors have been removed from the tax rolls completely.

We raised the GIS earned income exemption — which was not the case under the honourable senator's government — from \$500 to \$3,500. We introduced automatic renewal for GIS for eligible seniors so they do not have to file year after year. Last year, 96 per cent of seniors in Canada had GIS renewed automatically.

We launched a national awareness campaign on the very serious issue of elder abuse, including financial abuse. Of course, we were the government that established in the first place a Minister of State (Seniors) and a National Seniors Council.

I think, honourable senators, we need no lectures or lessons from Senator Eggleton on looking after our seniors, especially those with lower incomes.

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENT

ECO-ENERGY RETROFIT PROGRAM

Hon. Pierre De Bané: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canadians are disappointed that the government is putting a premature end to the popular eco-ENERGY retrofit program, despite the fact that less than half the budget dedicated to the program has been used and the program is still in high demand.

Senator Ringuette: It is because the election is over.

Senator De Bané: Senator Ringuette is saying that it is because the election campaign is over, and she is right. These cuts are doing away with concrete measures that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while creating employment and generating savings on home energy bills. I understand that the government wants to reduce the deficit that it has created since it came to power. However, I maintain that we must invest money in making Canadian homes more energy efficient because this is a priority and because all governments must do their share to combat climate change.

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, unfortunately Senator De Bané is mistaken. We did not cut this program. We designated \$400 million to the program, and the program is fully subscribed. All of the money the government put out in the budget for the program has been fully subscribed. The program will provide a quarter of a million Canadian families with up to \$5,000 to make their homes more efficient. This program is expected to generate \$4 billion in economic activity across Canada, creating and protecting thousands of jobs.

It was a matter of the program being there and Canadians taking full advantage of it. That is a fact.

The other fact, honourable senators, is that when this program was introduced in the other place, Senator De Bané's colleagues voted against it. Our government is very proud that we actually carried on with it and it has been a great success.

Senator De Bané: Honourable senators, the government claims it has a strategy to reduce greenhouse gases. Yet we learned yesterday that even the petroleum lobby believes Canada has no effective strategy to combat greenhouse gases and has urged the federal government to deliver real climate change solutions to restore the country's sagging environmental reputation. Cancelling the ecoENERGY Retrofit — Homes Program ahead of schedule sends another dismal message about this government's commitment to fighting climate change.

I ask the leader again, with her government's poor reputation on the environment, with many homeowners still interested in the program, and with economists warning about a contraction of the economy, could she please explain why the government thinks it is not a good investment to maintain this program, which would help so many local economies and reduce greenhouse gases?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I answered that question. We did not cancel the program; we budgeted \$400 million for it. It was fully subscribed. Canadians have taken full advantage of it. It is assisting a quarter of a million Canadian families to upgrade and retrofit their homes, and it has created billions of dollars in economic activity with all these small businesses participating.

We did not cancel it. We put \$400 million out. It was fully subscribed. It is like anything else. Senator De Bané may decide he wants to spend \$1,000 on an appliance. He buys the appliance and spends a thousand dollars, but it does not mean he cancels his plan because he has his appliance.

[Translation]

FINANCE

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Last weekend, *La Presse* reported that the small Canadian mining company UraMin was at the heart of a political and financial scandal in France. The French state corporation Areva bought UraMin in 2007 for \$2.5 billion believing that UraMin owned significant uranium reserves in Africa, in particular.

Four years later — just recently — Areva reported a loss of \$2 billion because the uranium reserves were completely inaccessible or overvalued.

• (1500)

The article in *La Presse* also states that the Bank of Montreal acted as a financial advisor to UraMin in its transaction with Areva. Considering that the implication of a Canadian bank in this scandal, which is common knowledge in France, has the potential to harm Canada's international reputation, can you guarantee to this chamber that the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions will look into the role and actions of the Bank of Montreal in this affair?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I am not in a position to comment on stories about UraMin in *La Presse* or to cast judgment on any organization, let alone a Canadian bank. I cannot answer. I do not know about the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, so I will simply take the question as notice.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: As a supplementary question, just to prove my good faith, senators probably remember the Bre-X scandal in the 1990s. That proved that the mining sector was extremely vulnerable to speculation and fraud. Fast forward to 2012 and UraMin begins to look like déjà vu.

Considering that there is reason to believe that UraMin might have engaged in insider trading and other fraudulent activity, after the declaration of Commissioner Paulson of the RCMP who said that his crime unit has to do more, would the leader recommend to the government that the RCMP financial crime division start an investigation immediately into UraMin's dealing with Areva and clean up Canada's reputation?

Senator LeBreton: The honourable senator is asking me, as a member of the cabinet, to do something that would be unwise. I will not recommend any such course of action. Other than what I read in the media, I cannot comment on this, but I will make the honourable senator's views known to my colleagues.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour of presenting delayed answers to the oral questions raised by the Honourable Senator Dallaire on November 22, 2011, and February 2, 2012, regarding suicide in the Canadian Forces.

[English]

I also have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Jaffer on December 16, 2011, concerning the Muskoka initiative.

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NUMBER OF SUICIDES OF SOLDIERS IN THEATRE—POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

(Response to questions raised by Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire on November 22, 2011 and February 2, 2012)

The Canadian Forces (CF) take the issue of member suicide very seriously. Great efforts are made to identify members at risk for mental health problems and to provide them with assistance in the form of treatment, counselling, and other types of support. The death of even one member of the CF family by suicide is one too many.

When a suicide occurs in the CF Regular Force or the Reserve Force, a Significant Incident Report is generated. CF policy also requires that all member suicides be investigated by a Board of Inquiry (BOI) and by a Medical Professional Technical Review process. In the CF, suicides are tracked by the Director of Casualty Support Management. There are currently no identifiable gaps in the tracking system.

When the CF began tracking casualty statistics for Afghanistan, it was decided that any death of an individual, regardless of the cause, that occurred while that individual was on Special Duty Operation or in a Special Duty Area would be counted as an Afghanistan death. It follows then that deaths not meeting this criterion would not be counted as an Afghanistan death. This decision was intended to keep the casualty statistics as focused on Afghanistan service as possible. In addition, unless an individual leaves a suicide note, it is virtually impossible to understand the reasons for the suicide. For this reason, it is not possible to tie the death to Afghanistan service with any degree of assurance.

It should also be remembered that being counted as an "Afghanistan" casualty creates no tangible benefits for families affected by suicides. Any death attributable to service creates CF and VAC benefits for family survivors — regardless of the location of the death.

Until recently, there was no ongoing surveillance within the CF or within Veterans Affairs Canada for suicide among veterans. To address this, the Department of National Defence (DND) and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) began working with Statistics Canada to develop the capacity to look at cancer incidence and mortality, including suicide-related mortality, in members and in veterans (including Reservists) who served since 1972. This process involves linking CF personnel records with the national death and cancer registries on a periodic basis. The initial report of the CF Cancer and Mortality Study was released in May 2011. The results of this study will be used to inform research, policy and program development.

Ongoing surveillance also contributes to the CF focus on continually improving suicide prevention programs as well as caring for ill and injured CF personnel, veterans and their families.

The CF has an extensive suicide prevention program that includes primary prevention programs, clinical intervention, non-clinical intervention, and mental health education.

Tremendous strides have been made in recent years in supporting military personnel who suffer from deployment-related mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder. The CF have appointed a Special Advisor for Operational Stress Injuries and skilled mental health teams across Canada provide clinical social work, psychiatric and psychological services. As of January 2012, the CF have over 378 full-time mental health professionals

and are working to hire more. In fact, when compared to our NATO allies, the CF has the greatest ratio of mental health care workers to soldiers.

The CF provides mental health care through 38 primary care clinics and detachments and 26 mental health clinics across Canada, and support is provided throughout the entire career and deployment cycle of a CF member. The CF now has 24 Integrated Personnel Support Centres across Canada that bring together a number of important Veterans Affairs and CF services to better serve ill and injured CF members, veterans, and their families. The Department has invested significantly in new technology and infrastructure to better support and care for our troops, and has dedicated funds to further enhance these efforts in the years to come. In addition, the CF and Veterans Affairs work together to ensure that current and former military personnel receive continuity of care throughout the treatment process.

[English]

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

FOREIGN AID FOR MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(Response to questions raised by Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer on November 23 and December 16, 2011)

At the 2010 G8 Summit, the Prime Minister made two commitments totalling \$2.85 billion to support maternal, newborn and child health efforts in developing countries. Canada's contribution to the Muskoka Initiative is \$1.1 billion of new money over five years to support programs to save the lives of women and children in developing countries. The Prime Minister also committed to maintain existing funding levels of \$1.75 billion between 2010 and 2015.

To date, the Government has disbursed over \$228 million of its \$1.1 billion commitment, and nearly \$562 million of its \$1.75 billion commitment. Updates on the Government's progress on meeting these commitments are available on the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) Open Data website: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/CAR-616141241-PD4.

Canada's \$1.1 billion Muskoka Initiative commitment will support comprehensive and integrated approaches that provide necessary health services for mothers and children, particularly those at the local level. Overall, 80 percent of the funding is going to countries in sub-Saharan Africa, given the great need in the region. Through this effort, Canada is investing in three types of partners:

- Ten developing country partners: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Haiti, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan and Tanzania. To date, over \$136 million has been disbursed to projects and programs supporting these countries efforts to improve maternal, newborn and child health.

- Multilateral and global partners: In supporting multilateral and global partners, Canada will reach a broader range of countries where the need is greatest. Examples include: the GAVI Alliance to distribute vaccines against pneumonia and diarrheal disease, and the Micronutrient Initiative to deliver essential vitamin and mineral supplements around the world. To date, over \$88 million has been disbursed to these types of partners.
- Canadian development organizations working in developing countries: Through the Muskoka Initiative Partnership Program, which was announced by the Prime Minister in September 2010, 28 projects from Canadian organizations will be undertaken to achieve concrete development results that will reduce maternal, newborn, and child mortality over the next five years. To date, over \$4 million has been disbursed to these partners.

To date, projects and programs representing over \$830 million of Canada's \$1.1 billion commitment has been announced. Details about all of Canada's maternal, newborn and child health programming can be found on CIDA's website: Overview of Canada's efforts: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/MNCH. List of projects and programs funded through Canada's Muskoka Initiative commitment: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/FRA-623144748-Q2X.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ANNE-MARIE ROBINSON RECEIVED
IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

On the Order:

The Senate in Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

(The Senate was accordingly adjourned during pleasure and put into Committee of the Whole, the Honourable Senator Oliver in the chair.)

The Chair: Honourable senators, rule 83 states:

When the Senate is put into Committee of the Whole every Senator shall sit in the place assigned to that Senator. A Senator who desires to speak shall rise and address the Chair.

Is it agreed, honourable senators, that rule 83 be waived?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Chair: I remind honourable senators that the Committee of the Whole is meeting pursuant to the order adopted February 8, 2012, which states:

That, at the end of Question Period and Delayed Answers on Tuesday, February 14, 2012, the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole in order to receive Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

That the Committee of the Whole report to the Senate no later than one hour after it begins.

I now ask the witness to enter.

(Pursuant to Order of the Senate, Anne-Marie Robinson was escorted to a seat in the Senate Chamber.)

The Chair: Honourable senators, the Senate is resolved into a Committee of the Whole to hear from Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as President of the Public Service Commission.

Ms. Robinson, thank you for being with us here today. I invite you to begin your introductory remarks, which will be followed by the senators' questions. You now have the floor.

Anne-Marie Robinson, President of the Public Service Commission: Mr. Chair and honourable Senators, thank you very much for inviting me here today. I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss with you my appointment as President of the Public Service Commission of Canada, a singular institution with a remarkable history.

[English]

Over 100 years ago, Parliament passed legislation creating the first permanent commission responsible for safeguarding merit and non-partisanship in the federal public service. Under the Public Service Employment Act, my nomination as president requires the approval of both the House of Commons and the Senate. I met with the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates last week, and I value this meeting as an important part of that process.

I also went through an exhaustive selection process, which I am pleased to discuss with you today, and I am honoured to be recommended for this position. If I am confirmed, I look forward to bringing to my work a deep respect for Parliament, an in-depth knowledge of the commission and a good understanding of human resource management.

I also bring my recent experience as a senior executive in a large operational department and a profound sense of pride in the work that I do as a public servant on behalf of Canadians. I am also committed to excellence and looking for innovative ways to continually improve how the commission does its work. I am both humbled and happy to have had the opportunity to return to the commission.

My first job at the commission was Director General Policy at a time when it was moving forward with policy initiatives to help modernize human resource management in the federal public service. I am proud to have supported Parliament's work on the legislative reforms that eventually became the current Public Service Employment Act in 2003. Those changes had significant impacts on the Public Service Commission.

When I later became vice-president of the Corporate Management Branch, I was pleased to help develop a stronger oversight role in a fully delegated staffing system, a new political activities regime and a new approach for the delivery of its staffing and assessment services.

The commission put in place corporate systems and structures to support this transformation, for instance in the areas of communications, governance and protocols for reporting to Parliament.

• (1510)

I worked closely with Ms. Barrados in building these systems and I am very happy to see that they are still in place. I have spent the last three years at Health Canada as Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations and Inuit Health, and then more recently as the Associate Deputy Minister. There I was responsible for overseeing regional operations and I played a key role in managing its investment planning and performance management.

Throughout my career, I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work on both the policy side and to have managed large programs and dealt with complex issues. For example, I have seen first-hand the role that recruiting and staffing play in the delivery of health care to First Nations and Inuit, and other vital services for Canadians. As well, I learned the importance of working with stakeholders and building relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

[Translation]

I would now like to discuss the mandate and activities of the Public Service Commission. The *Public Service Employment Act* sets out a staffing system based on values where deputy heads have greater responsibilities. The commission fulfills its mandate by delegating staffing to deputy heads, providing clear policy direction to support delegation, conducting effective oversight, and delivering innovative services. It protects the values of fairness, access, representativeness and transparency. I consider these values to be fundamental.

The commission is responsible for identifying and eliminating barriers in recruitment and staffing with the continued objective of promoting a public service that is more representative of Canadian society. The commission also contributes to maintaining a bilingual public service that respects Canada's two official languages. I have the privilege of working in an organization where bilingualism is well established. I strongly encourage everyone to interact with me in the language of their choice.

I am very aware of the commission's responsibility to report to Parliament on its activities and on the health of the staffing system. Ms. Barrados made an important contribution

towards establishing productive relations with Parliament. Her appearances before the Senate committees on national finance, official languages and human rights have brought to light certain questions related to staffing and non-partisanship in the federal public service.

I hope to have the opportunity to work together with Parliament to review the budget documents, annual reports and any other issue of interest. I also look forward to participating in the discussions on the *Public Service Modernization Act* report recently tabled by the President of Treasury Board.

I would now like to discuss the priorities I foresee for the commission. In a delegated staffing system, the commission needs effective oversight to ensure that values are respected. This requires sound analysis based on objective data, studies, audits and investigations. The commission will be called upon to deliver its mandate while looking for ways to better utilize its centralized data.

In the coming months, the commission will be called upon to provide ongoing support to organizations as they undertake the implementation of their deficit reduction plans. I realize that this period will be difficult for both organizations and employees

If I am confirmed, I plan to provide deputy heads and employees with a priority administration system that functions soundly and to support selection processes that are transparent and fair.

I am also committed to working closely with our human resources partners. I intend to collaborate with the commissioners, once they are nominated, in order to pursue the work already undertaken by Ms. Barrados.

The role of the commission in regard to staffing values will be critical. Employment equity and official languages are also important issues. These issues will need to be kept in balance while the deficit reduction plan is being implemented. At the same time, the public service will need to continue to conduct targeted recruitment to ensure that the public service of the future has a skilled workforce that can deliver results for Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Chair, in concluding, the Public Service Commission has played a vital role in creating a public service that is a model for many countries. If confirmed as President of the Public Service Commission, I look forward to working with senators and other parliamentarians, as well as public service commissioners. I would also like to say that I deeply value the dedication and professionalism of the employees who work at the commission and I look forward to working with them in carrying out the commission's mandate.

I am also committed to fostering strong relations with all stakeholders, departments, as well as bargaining agents, so that Canadians will continue to benefit from a professional and non-partisan public service.

[Ms. Robinson]

Thank you very much and I would be very pleased to respond to your questions.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you. Honourable senators, I have a list of senators who wish to ask questions.

[English]

Senator Marshall: Ms. Robinson, thank you very much for being here today.

I am a member of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. Ms. Barrados has appeared before us many times. One of the areas I have raised, and I have always been interested in because I have worked at both the bureaucratic and the political levels, is the focus on making sure there is no political interference in the public service. However, one of the areas I have always been interested in is how to safeguard against bureaucratic interference. Could you speak to that? I am always interested in hearing the views of the Public Service Commission on that issue.

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for the question.

Yes, with respect to that risk, I would say that is why it is necessary for the commission to have the audit role that it has. We do many things. Through the delegation instruments we set policies and we give guidance to departments on how to staff appropriately under the act. As part of that, we have — and this was very much put in place by Ms. Barrados — a robust audit program. Based on a risk-based analysis, we are able to go into departments and ensure that staffing is done in accordance with the values under the act. Then, from time to time, we can conduct investigations as well. We have powers to take corrective measures when necessary.

I would say, however, that this is a new staffing regime under the new law. We have been conducting audits over the last five to six or seven years and we have seen significant improvements. Departments are putting in systems that have much better human resource planning, and they also are developing their own systems for monitoring their staffing systems. There are always some risks with respect to that area. We do see problems from time to time, but that is why Parliament has given the commission the capacity to audit the activities of departments.

Senator Marshall: One of the risks identified when Ms. Barrados appeared before the Finance Committee is the issue of casual employees. It appears, based on the data provided, that many casual employees coming through the system, not through the normal process, actually ended up in permanent positions within the public service.

What do you envision for that group of people in the long term?

• (1520)

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for the question. Yes, that is an area that the commission has followed up on periodically and that I would see us continuing to monitor. Casual employment is intended to serve short-term needs — temporary or seasonal

needs. We have the capacity in place to do follow-up studies to the study done by Ms. Barrados. I would say the key to seeing improvements in this area is, again, human resource planning in departments. Treasury Board has overall responsibility for human resource planning. I will work with them to share what we are finding through our audits and to work with departments to ensure that the better the planning tools they have in place, the better they can target the use of a casual and a permanent workforce in an appropriate way.

Senator Marshall: Thank you.

Senator Jaffer: Welcome, Ms. Robinson. As the chair of the Human Rights Committee, I am certainly looking forward to working with you. As you are aware, one of your responsibilities is employment equity in the Public Service Commission, which affects women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. I know you are aware that the three branches, the Public Service Commission, the Treasury Board and Canadian Human Rights Commission, are the pillars. I would like to ask you, since you have worked in the Public Service Commission before, how do you see the employment equity goals being achieved? It has now been 26 years, and we are still waiting.

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for raising this issue because I, too, consider this a very important issue and a priority for me during my time, if I am nominated, at the Public Service Commission.

I would say that there are many things the commission can do. One thing I have seen since I arrived is that the commission has done very useful research in better understanding what types of things in a selection process could provide barriers for people from different equity groups being appointed to those positions. I am very committed to continuing that research. Then, when we find those best practices, it is critical that we share that information with departments so that they can incorporate it into their day-to-day planning and that we also ensure that they take targeted measures when necessary.

I think the key to being able to do that well is data. It is extremely important for us to work with the Treasury Board. Efforts have been made over the last while to collectively improve the way we collect the data so that we understand where we have gaps and can target interventions appropriately where we still have difficulties.

Senator Jaffer: I really appreciate your focus on the data because, as you know, every time Ms. Barrados appeared in front of our committee, the big issue was the lack of data collecting especially when it came to the issue of visible minorities and the self-identification issue. That has always been an issue. The last time she was here before our committee, she said:

Improved methodology and more reliable data are essential for getting a more accurate picture of employment equity in the public service and for reducing the reporting burden on organizations.

She went on to say that she would monitor how this data was collected. I look forward to your focus on collecting the data.

Another thing I am very concerned about, especially in this downsizing, is jobs. I understand that 50 per cent of the jobs within the federal public service are not advertised and 50 per cent are. I am wondering if you have given any thought to how you will be advising on this issue?

Ms. Robinson: I do not have the data about the proportions of positions that are advertised or not advertised, but I am very happy to do that research and send that information to the committee. I can say, though, that during the implementation of the deficit reduction action plan, the commission is already working with departments to ensure that the processes put in place in terms of our role for managing that will ensure that there are no barriers that could have a negative impact on groups under the Employment Equity Act.

Senator Jaffer: In 1984, Justice Abella said that equality and employment will not happen unless we all make it happen. We look forward to your leadership, especially with the employment equity groups. Thank you.

Senator Mercer: Ms. Robinson, thank you for being here. I have a series of questions. I first wanted to look at the annual report of 2010-11, Chapter 6, where there are statistics I found interesting. The number of active cases carried over from previous years was 180, and the total number of active cases in 2010-11 was 696. The number of cases completed was 490. That is a pretty good clearance rate. However, the number that I wanted to talk about is the number of active cases remaining as of March 31, 2011, and that was at 204, which is up 24 from the beginning of that year.

Have you been able to determine whether you will have enough resources at the commission to be able to help clear that backlog? If it is going to grow by over 10 per cent each year — if this is a trend — will this become problematic for the future?

Ms. Robinson: Thank you. If I could ask the honourable senator for clarification, does that question relate to the priority system?

Senator Mercer: The investigations into the appointment process.

Ms. Robinson: The workload in that area does fluctuate from time to time, so I do need to watch carefully to ensure that we have the capacity to do investigations on a timely basis. When I met with my staff when I first arrived at the commission, I did discuss that question with the vice-presidents, and I was assured that the investigations branch does have resources to deal with the investigations that are now before it. However, I will monitor that closely. The commission, like other departments, does have the capacity, from time to time, to reallocate between priorities.

Senator Mercer: I appreciate that answer. I wish you well in that. Many of us from Atlantic Canada have a good deal of concern about how the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency has been managed and staffed. There have been numerous complaints about individuals who have been hired without a job posting and, in some cases, without even an interview. They have just been given a job and they showed up for work. There have

been allegations of political interference from the former Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the member for Central Nova, because a lot of these appointments all have a connection back to him and his office.

Last week or perhaps the week before, the current Minister for ACOA, Mr. Valcourt, was unable to answer a question in the House of Commons because he said the hiring practices of ACOA are under investigation by the Public Service Commission.

How broad of an investigation into ACOA's hiring practices is this? Is it going across the board, looking at all the hiring in the last number of years and, in particular, paying attention to whether the proper process was followed where jobs were posted, competitions were held, interviews were held and, in certain cases where testing was required, tests were held, and the successful candidate had a test score that put him or her in the bracket of the desired score?

Ms. Robinson: I can say that those investigations at ACOA are under way; because of the nature of that process, I am not at liberty to discuss the details of those investigations.

In terms of the timing, I expect they will be finished by the summer, and I will commit to present to Parliament the results of those investigations as soon as possible thereafter.

Senator Mercer: If your schedule is on time, we will get those results tabled at the fall session of Parliament?

Ms. Robinson: That is what I anticipate.

• (1530)

Senator Mercer: One of the problems, of course, is that your mandate does not cover the appointment of board members of agencies such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, ACOA. When we talk about political interference and about the need for the process to be followed, one issue is that the board is involved in interviews of people at senior levels. We acknowledge that board members are politically appointed by the government of the day. Therefore, a group of people appointed by the government are interviewing people internally for positions within an agency such as ACOA; however, we do not have any oversight by you, or apparently anyone else, of the people conducting that process, that is, the board of an agency, again such as ACOA.

Do you think your mandate should be broadened to include reference to board appointments at agencies such as ACOA?

Ms. Robinson: I would start by saying that when we do an investigation, we do a thorough investigation and report those results to Parliament in a timely manner. It is early days for me to say that. I must admit that this is a new area for me, and I have not had a lot of experience. However, I have been assured by my investigators that we have sufficient powers to do the investigation that needs to be done at this time. It is possible that I could come back to Parliament at a different time and signal something different, but at this time, that is what I know.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Ms. Robinson, during your preliminary presentation, you indicated that respect for official languages is important and that it is imperative to ensure that public servants have the language skills they need to serve Canadians.

Nearly 200 French teaching jobs in the public service will be cut at the end of March and transferred to the private sector. Given that the Public Service Commission is responsible for the second language testing system and for ensuring that all public servants achieve the required results within a period of two years, how do you plan to closely monitor the success rate of public servants?

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for asking that question. You are right when you say that the Public Service Commission is responsible for developing second language testing. It is also responsible for monitoring all test results.

We intend to continue to monitor and verify the success rate of our exams to make sure that it remains the same following the changes to public servants' training.

Senator Tardif: What type of follow-up do you intend to pursue if the success rate for exams and the state of bilingualism in the public service prove to be unsatisfactory?

Ms. Robinson: I would like to clarify the Public Service Commission's mandate and its three roles with regard to official languages. First, as I already mentioned, we are responsible for the development of second-language skills and for monitoring the exam success rate. If we notice a problem, we can work with the private sector and share information about our exams. We can also work with the departments and Treasury Board and share our results.

The Public Service Commission's other roles involve ensuring that people who are in non-imperative positions reach the level required by the position within a period of two years and ensuring that candidates who are participating in a selection process are able to do so in the language of their choice.

[English]

Senator Meredith: Ms. Robinson, thank you for appearing before us this afternoon. My first question is this: Why do you want to take on this presidency?

Ms. Robinson: I am a career public servant, and I care very much about the public service as an institution. I firmly believe that people are the biggest asset that we have in the public service and that any institution or organization in the modern world has today. Therefore, it would be an honour for me to have an opportunity to make a contribution to the staffing, the recruitment and the question of political impartiality, which we talked about here today.

It is a chance for me to support the public service and to have the workforce that we need for the future. Working at Health Canada over the past three years and delivering health care services with First Nations for First Nations communities allowed

me to see first-hand the role that public servants play. Therefore, I think it is important that we have the best people possible in the jobs and that we also give opportunities to Canadians to work in the public service because it is a wonderful place to work. Any role that I can play to support that objective would be an honour for me.

Senator Meredith: I am glad you mentioned the workforce. Senator Jaffer spoke to you about equity and the fact that we still have a disproportionate number of visible minorities who have yet to be promoted within the public service. How will you address the situation of the brick wall run into by visible minorities working for the public service in Canada? It is not even a glass ceiling because it is not transparent. How do you plan to fix that?

Ms. Robinson: I reinforce what I said previously. There are many steps to this and many things that the commission can do. Gathering the data is critical so that we understand where we have challenges and can target the tools we have to intervene in those cases. The commission does research on best practices, and we delegate staffing authority to departments. I need to work with departments and with Treasury Board, which also shares responsibility in this area with the commission, to ensure that we have good plans in place that are based on good data and good information.

I would also signal that as a public servant I have seen that clear leadership works very well; therefore, I will work with the deputy heads around town. I know they are committed to this issue and are willing to work with me and with Treasury Board to continue to make progress.

I was happy to note in the report tabled recently by the Treasury Board that there have been some improvements. That does not mean we are there, so we will continue to work hard on these issues until we see results and have a public service that is representative of Canadian society.

Senator Meredith: Going forward with your past experiences and the challenges that you will face in the public service, how will you deal with those challenges? The government is looking at austerity measures and attrition, and those individuals will be affected. How will you deal with those challenges as they arise?

Ms. Robinson: With respect to the implementation of the deficit reduction action plan, there are a few key roles that the commission needs to play. Specifically, we are responsible for administering the priority system, so it is a priority for me to ensure that the system functions well. That is the place where people who are declared surplus would go into the priority system, and the Public Service Commission helps them to find jobs for which they are qualified. That is a very important tool in the system.

As well, during a reduction exercise, the commission is responsible for the policy regarding selection for retention. It is a merit-based process such that when a work unit of 100 people will be impacted and has to be reduced by four or five people, the selection-for-retention policy is used to determine who is retained in the workforce. It is a merit-based process under the Public Service Employment Act.

• (1540)

I know that folks at the commission are out working with departments and actively ensuring that the guidance we give with respect to this is understood by departments. We are out at the front end of this exercise supporting departments to ensure things go as best they can.

Senator Meredith: Thank you very much. We wish you all the best and I look forward to working with you as a member of the Human Rights Committee.

The Chair: Honourable senators, I wish to draw to your attention that we have fewer than 25 minutes left and I have on my list the Honourable Senators Dallaire, Ringuette, Munson, Martin, Comeau and Moore.

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: Ms. Robinson, are you responsible for ensuring that there is a balance between departments in the number of people occupying EX or higher positions? Are you responsible for ensuring that there is not an abuse of this level of responsibility in some departments compared to others?

Ms. Robinson: That is the mandate of Treasury Board and not the commission.

Senator Dallaire: Thus, the commission is not mandated to investigate or audit similar matters?

Ms. Robinson: Not when it comes to comparing the number of EX positions or senior managers in different departments.

Senator Dallaire: With respect to the development of executives, what are your views on professional development for executives at the EX level, on their leadership skills throughout their careers and when they are occupying this management position? Is there a formal education and development method for leadership?

Ms. Robinson: Thank you very much for this question. I would first like to say that I support executive training because it is so important. The Public Service Commission is responsible, with deputy heads, for all executive training. The commission has a vested interest because we manage the staffing process in cooperation with the department. Therefore, it is important for the commission to work with the department to establish the proper competencies for the positions. Furthermore, the development program and processes are necessary to support public servants who would like to develop the skills required for an executive position.

[English]

Senator Dallaire: Do you have an actual training and development program for people to achieve higher ranks of responsibility with regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed on the leadership side versus the management side of their duties?

Ms. Robinson: That is a very important question. When we work with departments to establish the competencies for positions, it is important that we do the right research and

establish those competencies appropriately. Departments, working with the Canada School of Public Service, then work together to provide developmental opportunities and training so that managers can gain those competencies. Some of that is done through formal training.

Of course, in my career I have seen a lot of useful training done through assignments, through people being given projects to do, and through job shadowing and mentoring. I think we need a creative suite of things available to support people in developing these skills.

Senator Dallaire: When I was ADM Personnel with 22,000 civilian staff working for me, there was no system of developing leadership, as such. It was by osmosis and experience and not by formal education, particularly even in the senior cadres.

I am gathering from your response that there is still no set requirement, as people move up the chain, to achieve certain specific programs of development in order to go to the next level.

In that context, do you not believe that the program of moving EXs between jobs to gain experience has, perhaps, been overstated as the source of development and created instability in departments with regard to providing the necessary depth of advice people need to do the job?

Ms. Robinson: Yes. I would start by clarifying that it is the deputy ministers and the Treasury Board who have policy responsibility for training. I think you also made a comment about the mobility of public servants. That is an area that the commission has looked at in the past. Some of that was driven in the past where we saw the fast movement of people and where we had shortages in certain areas. However, many people have said — and certainly it has been my personal experience — that sometimes when that movement is too fast, people do not stay long enough in their jobs.

You said that you held those jobs yourself, so you would understand, of course, that when you are in senior director general jobs and assistant deputy minister jobs, you do not make progress in short periods of time. You have to stick with it for much longer periods of time in order to make significant impacts on a job or a program.

Senator Dallaire: Your job is to feed that information back to Treasury Board to reassess a program like that, correct?

Ms. Robinson: Yes, we have many central databases where we collect data, for example, on the mobility of people between jobs. We then work with departments and with Treasury Board to share that information. In many respects in the human resource area, while the commission is an independent agency that reports directly to Parliament, we do share a common business process. That is why I believe it is necessary for me to work closely with the departments and with Treasury Board on these types of issues.

Senator Dallaire: Is it still a fact that most departments hand in, at the end of the year, a fairly substantive amount of their training dollars for your civilian staff, because it has not been used up, to continue the development of their personnel?

[Ms. Robinson]

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for the question. I cannot respond to that question because that is not an area under the commission's mandate and I would not have that information.

Senator Dallaire: You have never audited that?

Ms. Robinson: No, and it would not be under our jurisdiction to audit that question.

Senator Dallaire: I see.

Have you overseen the policies that were introduced with regard to the employment of veterans in the public service and the assistance that they need to be trained to be competitive? Do you believe a policy across the board in the public service in all departments should be imposed on DMs to employ veterans on a priority basis?

Ms. Robinson: This is a new area for me. You mentioned the priority status given to these folks. The department has done some recent evaluations of this area. We will be coming out shortly with some different approaches to supporting people when they are making the transition into the public service.

With that said, I have noticed that we have had some positive results in placement, but we will continue to do follow-up in terms of ensuring that this is an important issue that all departments are paying attention to. The commission does have the capacity to work with departments in this area.

Senator Dallaire: Could I ask the chair that whatever report Ms. Robinson produces be made available to us sooner rather than later?

Ms. Robinson: Yes; absolutely.

The Chair: Honourable senators, we have fewer than 17 minutes left. Each senator has 10 minutes to ask their questions, and I still have Honourable Senator Ringuette, Honourable Senator Munson, Honourable Senator Martin, Honourable Senator Comeau and Honourable Senator Moore.

[Translation]

Senator Ringuette: Ms. Robinson, Ms. Barrados has left big shoes to fill. A great challenge awaits you.

• (1550)

The Public Service Commission is the recruitment agency for human resources for every federal government department. In the past few years I have noticed an increased use of private agencies in the recruitment process at various departments.

Could you tell this chamber what steps you are going to take in order to give the Public Service Commission its central and essential role back?

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for that question. I can tell you that using casual employees should be reserved for satisfying short-term needs. The commission will continue to observe the use of casual employees and will work with the department to correct the situation and improve human resources planning if there is a problem.

Senator Ringuette: Ms. Robinson, I must say, you have not reassured me. If private sector recruitment agencies can provide employees based on the short-term needs of the various departments, why can the commission not do the same?

Ms. Robinson: The departments have been given the delegated authority. Normally, the deputy minister or the deputy heads can follow the necessary steps for staffing. I do not know whether you are asking me if it is necessary for the commission to hire employees the same way an agency would.

[English]

Senator Ringuette: Let me say this in English. The primary and central role, since the creation of the Public Service Commission, has been the hiring of human resources for the different departments of government. In the last few years, there has been a drastic increase in the usage of private placement agencies to hire through, most of the time, I would say, the back door and sidetrack the regulation of the commission to hire employees, be it casual or long term. They even go up to five years of employment.

The central role of the commission has been bypassed. My first question to you was, what will you do to reacquire that central function of the commission?

My second question is, if those private agencies, with very limited human resources and technology, can provide casual or short-term employees to the different government departments, why can the Public Service Commission, with all of its human resources and technology — five years ago we spent \$48 million on new computer equipment — be the agency to supply to all those government departments the human resources which would make up short term, casual term, long term, whatever?

This is a major challenge. I understand the importance of human resource audits to provide Parliament with data and where we are going. The essential and predominant role of the commission is a fair hiring process.

How — what tools and processes — will you undertake to ensure that the commission remains in and regains that position of the government departments' hiring agency?

Ms. Robinson: I would start by saying that, given the size of the public service, it was envisioned under the act that the appointment authority of the commission would be delegated to departments and departments would do the hiring. The commission's role, rather than doing the hiring directly, would be to use its oversight powers to survey how the authority was being used by departments.

I understand the concern that you have raised about the use of casual and contract workers. Many of the policies in those areas are under the responsibility of the Treasury Board. Again, I would point to the need for us to continue to do studies and understand how casual workers are being used.

One of the concerns the commission expresses about the use of casual workers is that sometimes they have an advantage in getting the permanent jobs in government. It is there that the commission has a key role to work with departments in order to ensure we have open access to hiring processes.

With respect to your third question about whether the commission itself would do the hiring directly, that is not a role the commission currently holds.

Senator Ringuette: I should have used the phrase "recruitment responsibility."

Ms. Robinson: Thank you for the clarification. The commission does have a key role in recruiting people. We do an annual recruitment campaign with departments, but departments also, under the new act, do a lot of their own external recruitment. We tend to focus our activities now in the area of recruiting students.

Senator Ringuette: I have been watching what has been going on with regard to recruiting in the Public Service Commission. Ms. Barrados, the former president of the commission, and I had been very involved with regard to removing hiring barriers for all Canadians, removing the 50-kilometre barrier, the geographic limitation, that deputy ministers had put into any job posting just to remove the opportunity.

From your answer, I am beginning to get a little worried. These are regulations that Ms. Barrados worked on. I said, okay, the regulations will be there and I will not move forward again with the legislation to put that in place. Should I be worried?

If you agree that a department, a deputy minister, can bypass your organization to do hiring and recruitment, removing the equity issues that we were looking at, removing the fairness across the land that we have been working on in respect of removing the 50-kilometre requirement, I am becoming worried.

The Chair: Ms. Robinson, before you begin your response, may I say that the 10 minutes allotted to this senator have almost expired. You have a few seconds for response and I will go to the next senators.

Ms. Robinson: I would like to reassure the senator that it is not my intention to change the policies that are in place, including the national area of selection policy. I was at the commission when that policy was put in place, and I also supported the commission in developing the technology that was necessary to ensure that policy could be put into effect.

• (1600)

While I do make reference to the fact that it is the deputy ministers who do the administrative activity of staffing — they make their own human resource plans to manage their

operations — they must follow the policies of the commission. I would continue to keep those policies in place, and I will work to strengthen those policies where necessary.

Senator Munson: Very briefly, I would like to follow up Senator Jaffer and Senator Meredith on employment equity. It seems to me you are between a rock and a hard place. Here we have the prospect of downsizing in the public service, and I am curious to know what powers or mechanism you have right now? In the 2006 statistics, visible minorities represent 12.4 per cent. That is not good enough. How can you guarantee that the public service is truly representative of Canada's population? It will be a lot more difficult now.

Ms. Robinson: I do acknowledge that during this period of transition things will be more difficult in the public service. However, where I think the commission can play an important role is that as departments in some cases have to reduce their workforces, they will apply the policy from the commission that I discussed a bit earlier called selection for retention, which is a merit-based process. It will be very important for us to ensure that when departments use that approach to select the employees to retain in their workforce, they respect our obligations around diversity.

The commission has done research around ensuring that those processes are barrier-free. We will work with departments to ensure that they have that information.

Of course, during that same period we expect recruitment to slow down as we are going through these transitions. I agree with the remarks of Ms. Barrados as well — I think from the last time she was before a Senate committee — when she said that notwithstanding this transformation we are going through, it will be very important for us as a public service to continue to recruit in some targeted areas. Coming from Health Canada, I know from experience that notwithstanding this adjustment we are going through we still have shortage areas in health care, certain areas of science and in other areas. We still will be out there recruiting students and working with departments in their recruitment campaigns. We have opportunities there to address these issues.

Senator Munson: In the spirit of cooperation, I will give up the rest of my time to my two Conservative friends.

Senator Martin: I think my question may be a little bit redundant, but it builds on what others have already asked. It is regarding employment equity, but looking at regional differences. From your previous answers to other senators, it is my understanding that, regionally, the best federal employees may be those who can meet the needs of that region. For instance, on the West Coast, bilingualism is alive and well. French immersion is very healthy, but so are Punjabi immersion and Mandarin immersion. I was curious about the recruitment and hiring within specific regions where the needs will be quite different from other parts of Canada. What is being done, and what role would you play as the president?

Ms. Robinson: I would say that the hiring in each region is determined by the different departments, based on their operational needs. Where the commission plays a role is that it

is our job to ensure that staffing is done in accordance with the values in the act. When departments are staffing in these different geographic areas, they have information about whether they are meeting the requirements under the Employment Equity Act. That is where the commission can work with departments to ensure that positive measures and programs and other supports are put in place when necessary to make sure they meet their hiring goals.

Senator Martin: This is a question I had posed to Ms. Barrados and other officials regarding training in cultural sensitivity and how important that would be in those regions where interviews may be happening with Canadians. Those cultural differences can impact how things are interpreted and what happens thereafter. With processes in place, if there is a misunderstanding because of a lack of cultural sensitivity or awareness, it could really be burdensome on both sides, to the officials as well as the Canadians they are dealing with.

Ms. Robinson: I am very happy that you have raised this area. It is an area that I take a lot of interest in. The Public Service Commission has a very strong capacity in its Personnel Psychology Centre. We do a lot of work on trying to understand. We use different selection tools and instruments, including our language tests, for example. It is really critical that we ensure that instruments that are used in the hiring processes are barrier-free. As well, you mentioned the interview process. Training in awareness is done by departments, and I certainly will see myself playing a key role in promoting this with departments. You are correct that in an interview context it is important that cultural differences are understood and incorporated into part of the process. That is what a lot of the research by the commission has shown.

I will continue to support that research done by the commission, and then we share that information with departments as they do the bulk of the hiring.

Senator Martin: I, too, shall end here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

The Chair: Honourable senators, the committee has now been sitting for one hour. Pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate on February 8, 2011, I am obliged to interrupt the proceedings so that the committee can report to the Senate. I know the honourable senators will join me in thanking Ms. Robinson.

Honourable senators, is it agreed that I report to the Senate that the witness has been heard?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the sitting of the Senate is resumed.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, the Committee of the Whole, authorized by the Senate to hear from Ms. Anne-Marie Robinson respecting her appointment as the President of the Public Service Commission, reports that it has heard from said witness.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, continuing Orders of the Day.

MOTION TO APPROVE NOMINATION ADOPTED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government), pursuant to notice of February 7, 2012, moved:

That, in accordance with Subsection 4.(5) of the *Public Service Employment Act*, S.C. 2003, c. 22, ss. 12, 13, the Senate approve the appointment of Anne-Marie Robinson as President of the Public Service Commission.

(Motion agreed to.)

[English]

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Leave having been given to revert to Notices of Motions:

Hon. John D. Wallace: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That on Thursday, February 16, 2012, the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs have the power to sit even though the Senate may be then sitting, for the purpose of its consideration of Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, with the application of rule 95(4) being suspended in relation thereto.

• (1610)

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO REFER DOCUMENTS FROM STUDIES ON BILL C-15 DURING SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT, BILL S-7 AND S-10 DURING THIRD SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT AND BILL S-225 DURING SECOND SESSION OF THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT TO CURRENT STUDY ON BILL C-10

Hon. John D. Wallace: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I shall move:

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs during its study of Bill C-15, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament, and Bill S-10, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related

and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament; and that the papers and evidence received and taken by the Special Senate Committee on Anti-Terrorism during its study of Bill S-7, An Act to deter terrorism and to amend the State Immunity Act during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament and by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, during its study of Bill S-225, An Act to amend the State Immunity Act and the Criminal Code (deterring terrorism by providing a civil right of action against perpetrators and sponsors of terrorism), during the Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Parliament, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for the purposes of its study on Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, during the current session.

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY—MOTION IN AMENDMENT ADOPTED—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Raine, seconded by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;
- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;

- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and
- (g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products;

And on the motion in amendment of the Honourable Senator Nolin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, that the motion be amended as follows:

- 1) By replacing the words "which is poised for market growth" by the words "which wants to pursue its dynamic development"; and
- 2) By replacing paragraph (d) in the motion by the following:

"Modernizing and standardizing the grading of pure Maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade which would explain more clearly to the consumer the classification and the grading system;"

Hon. Kelvin Kenneth Ogilvie: Honourable senators, it is well known that Quebec is the leading producer of maple syrup in Canada, but I am proud to point out that Nova Scotia also has a vibrant maple industry.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Ogilvie: Plus, I am delighted to support the motion before us which would set the stage for important amendments to Canada's Maple Products Regulations, amendments that would benefit the industry and consumers alike. The driving force behind the proposed changes is the work of the International Maple Syrup Institute, which includes among its members the Maple Producers Association of Nova Scotia.

Before I comment on the recommendations, I would like to paint a picture of the maple industry in my home province. I think that with greater understanding of the industry's challenges and opportunities in Nova Scotia, all honourable senators would appreciate why it is so vital to support the motion.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, it is important to understand, first, that maple syrup is an agricultural product. In fact, it is the first product of the season offered by hard-working producers.

[English]

Honourable senators, Nova Scotia wants to keep producing safe and high quality maple products for years to come. Thus, to help ensure the long-term sustainability of sugar bushes and maple operations, the Maple Producers Association of Nova Scotia developed best management practices for its members. These covered issues such as sugar woods management, tree tapping, sap collection and storage, the processing of sap to syrup, personal hygiene, sanitizing equipment, labels, and recordkeeping.

With a record-breaking year in 2011, the outlook for Nova Scotia's maple industry seems positive. All told, 61 commercial producers generated some 143,000 litres of pure maple syrup last year from 371,000 taps. That means total production was the highest since 1994. Producers enjoyed the best yields since 2003, and the number of taps was also at a record high.

However, these numbers disguise a host of challenges experienced last year that highlight the importance the benefits of the motion will provide the producers. I am speaking of course to a confusing patchwork of grading systems that undermine the industry's visibility with consumers and that thwart attempts to expand into new markets. These are issues common to the maple industry throughout Canada and the United States, and that is why the motion before us is so timely and important.

The motion recognizes that maple syrup is a North American industry, one that demands an integrated, continent-wide approach. That is why the International Maple Syrup Institute, which has both American and Canadian members, is asking jurisdictions in both countries to amend their maple regulations. Given our country's status as the world's leading producer of maple syrup, the Government of Canada should take a leadership role to support the industry.

Let me look now at specific issues where the industry wants our support.

First, there is the question of what actually constitutes pure maple syrup. Currently, any common sweetener can be marketed as containing pure maple syrup. This is a travesty. A recent study identified 54 compounds in maple syrup from Canada, many with antioxidant activity and potential health benefits. The study indicated that these compounds may pack similar health benefits to those found in berries, tea, red wine and flaxseed. The study also found five new antioxidants that are found nowhere else in nature, making maple syrup a food unlike any other in the world.

Allowing companies to market sweeteners as products that contain maple syrup, even if 99.9 per cent of the sweetener is actually artificial, is not only unfair to the maple industry, but it sows confusion in the minds of consumers.

[Translation]

That is why the industry is proposing that a uniform definition be adopted as to what constitutes pure maple syrup so that all maple products meet specific production and processing requirements and are consistent with the regulations, standards and policies in effect within the federal and provincial governments and in the United States.

[English]

A uniform definition of pure maple syrup would create a level playing field among common sweeteners. Pure maple syrup represents less than 1 per cent of the market share of common sweetener sales in North America.

[Translation]

A uniform definition would enable the industry to market its product's virtues fairly and transparently, thereby attracting new consumers.

• (1620)

[English]

One of the most important components of a uniform definition would be a proper determination of grade and colour class. Currently, Canadian producers describe their product by colour and number, while their American counterparts use a letter system. In what amounts to a recipe for confusion, there is no way for consumers to know that Number 1 and Grade A are the same thing.

More than that, numbers and letters, even when combined with a colour code, tell consumers nothing about the most important quality of maple syrup — its flavour. Even worse, labels such as Number 2 and Grade B can suggest an inferior quality of maple syrup.

[Translation]

The industry has found a simple solution: a single grade with four distinct classes describing colour and taste.

[English]

For example, one type of Grade A syrup would be Amber Colour and Rich Taste. Another would be Dark Colour and Robust Taste.

At the same time, the industry proposes a second category — Processing Grade — for all maple syrup that does not meet the highest standards. To preserve the integrity of the industry, Processing Grade maple syrup would be kept out of retail markets. Instead, it would be available only for the food processing industry.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, all of these changes would benefit consumers. A uniform definition would enable them to recognize pure maple syrup easily.

[English]

Simplified standards and nomenclature mean consumers could more easily choose the flavour that best suits them, and the industry's efforts to keep inferior product off the shelves would give consumers more confidence in whatever pure maple syrup they buy.

In Nova Scotia last year, for example, about 94 per cent of the syrup was, or will be, sold as actual syrup. Only 6 per cent was made into other products, such as maple cream, maple butter and maple sugar. Clearly, there is a great deal of room for growth, and it starts with approving the motion before us today.

Honourable senators, by its very nature, Canada's maple industry is familiar with uncertainty and adversity. Each spring, to make syrup out of sap, producers must contend with everything from wild weather to wild animals. The real obstacle, however, comes not from natural sources but rather from outdated regulations that weigh down the industry worse than a week of wet snow.

Honourable senators, I am proud to describe my own affinity for this marvelous product. For more than 40 years, my family has consumed over 10 litres of pure maple syrup annually. For 13 of those years, we lived in Montreal and enjoyed the wonderful elixir of the Quebec sugar bush. For the remainder, we have relished the equally fine product from Nova Scotian producers. More recently, we have mixed in our own fine syrup, drawn from several beautiful maples in our yard on the edge of the Bay of Fundy.

Today, we have an opportunity to ease the industry's burden. The International Maple Syrup Institute has a well-considered plan to modernize maple regulations in relevant jurisdictions across North America. For this plan to succeed, the institute requires the cooperation of the federal governments in both Canada and the United States, not to mention governments in affected provinces and states.

The industry is looking to the Senate of Canada for leadership and vision. I, for one, am not prepared to disappoint them. I urge all honourable senators to join with me in approving the motion before us and giving our maple industry the support it deserves. A

[Translation]

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, given the importance of this matter to Quebec, I move adjournment of the debate so that I may research it further.

(On motion of Senator Hervieux-Payette, debate adjourned.)

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Frum, calling the attention of the Senate to egregious human rights abuses in Iran, particularly the use of torture and the cruel and inhuman treatment of unlawfully incarcerated political prisoners.

[Senator Ogilvie]

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I rise to join the important inquiry launched by our colleague Senator Frum into egregious human rights abuses in Iran. I will speak now and, if it is agreeable to the Senate, Senator Munson will speak following me for the balance of his time, continuing on the remarks that he began last week.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Cowan: Sarah Morgan and Andrew Apostolou, of the highly-respected NGO Freedom House, wrote an article for *Foreign Affairs Magazine* last November about the terrible human rights abuses in Iran. They proposed a strategy of highlighting these abuses on the world stage and actively supporting Iran's dissidents, in order to place "a new, more effective kind of pressure on Tehran and support the movement for democratic change from within." They called it the "Naming and Shaming Strategy."

This is what I believe Senator Frum is doing with this inquiry. I do not normally subscribe to "naming and shaming strategies," but in this particular situation I wholeheartedly support it. I think one of the greatest fears of a political prisoner must be that what they are doing will be in vain, that no one will ever know what took place. Silence is one of the most powerful allies of those governments that abuse the basic, fundamental human rights of their citizens, and that is what we are all working to combat.

We all watched and admired the courage of hundreds and thousands of Iranians as they poured into the streets to protest the 2009 election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, widely viewed as a sham victory. Then the security forces moved in. The Iranian authorities themselves admitted that they arrested more than 4,500 protesters. According to opposition groups, there are at least 1,000 political prisoners still in jail.

One young woman, Neda Agha-Soltan, an aspiring musician, was killed during those protests. Her murder was caught on video — and that galvanized the world.

Last year, 2011, again saw thousands of demonstrators in the streets of Tehran and other Iranian cities to support the pro-democracy movements in neighbouring countries and to protest the detention of Iranian opposition leaders. Once again, the government responded with violence. Once again, there were deaths and arrests.

Dozens of Iranians affiliated with opposition parties or student groups are in prison. The fate of others has been even worse.

As Senator Frum said, Iran has the highest per capita execution rate in the world. According to Human Rights Watch, in 2011 Iranian authorities carried out more than 600 executions, and, judging by last month, they may exceed even that horrific rate this year. My colleague, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, has described

Iran as being on “an execution binge.” Many of these executions were ostensibly for drug-related crimes, a category that has become a catch-all for the suppression of dissidents.

Iran has imprisoned more journalists and more bloggers than any other country in the world. The judiciary, in the words of Human Rights Watch, “works hand-in-hand with security and intelligence forces to harass, imprison and convict opposition and rights activists.”

Senator Eaton spoke of the arrest and imprisonment of Nasrin Sotoudeh, a lawyer and human rights activist. Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi said last August that at least 42 lawyers have faced persecution from the Iranian government since June 2009. Few, if any, independent rights organizations are able to operate openly in the country.

Senator Frum launched the inquiry by speaking of three Canadians currently imprisoned in Iran. One of these is Saeed Malekpour, a Canadian permanent resident who was born in Iran. Let me tell you a little more about Mr. Malekpour's situation. He has been sentenced to death for crimes against Islam and spreading corruption on earth — a sentence recently upheld by the Iranian Supreme Court. He is a web programmer accused of supposedly creating pornographic websites in Iran. He maintains that he is innocent, but, honourable senators, even if he were guilty, which he says emphatically he is not, there can be no justice when one is given the death penalty for creating offensive websites.

• (1630)

When he was first arrested in 2008, Mr. Malekpour was taken to the notorious Evin Prison, about which we heard the other day. He spent a year in solitary confinement without charge, without access to a lawyer and without any visits. He was put on state television, where he was forced to confess, a confession which he says was extracted under pressure of physical and psychological torture. In his words, “While I remained blindfolded and handcuffed, several individuals armed with cables, batons, and their fists struck and punched me. At times, they would flog my head and neck.”

My colleague in the other place, the Honourable Irwin Cotler, has been working for years now to fight the human rights abuses in Iran. He recently established an interparliamentary group for human rights in Iran, which he co-chairs with United States Senator Mark Kirk, to take up the cause of political prisoners in Iran. Mr. Cotler has pointed out that Mr. Malekpour's death sentence was reportedly reinstated under pressure from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, which he describes as being the epicentre of Iran's threat to human rights, peace and international security. In his words, they play “a central role in Iran's domestic repression, international terrorism, incitement to genocide, and nuclear proliferation.” According to the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center at Yale, they are also responsible for the murder of political dissidents inside and outside Iran.

The Canadian government must sanction the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and list it as a terrorist entity. Mr. Cotler, with the support of many of his parliamentary

colleagues, has been calling for this for several years. He has done so by sponsoring a draft bill and by pressing the government in Question Period and in debate. The government has said it needed more time to consider and study the issue.

For the reasons articulated so well by honourable senators on both sides of this chamber, the time for study is over. It is time, overdue, actually, for the government to act and to sanction the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and list them as the terrorist entity that they are — not just a few members, as the government did a few weeks ago, but the group itself.

I mentioned a draft bill. Almost three years ago, on June 9, 2009, Mr. Cotler, as our party's Special Counsel on Human Rights and International Justice, introduced a private member's bill, the proposed Iran accountability act, in the other place. Its purpose was to hold Iran to account for its incitement to genocide, domestic repression and nuclear armament. It set out a road map of steps that the Canadian government could take to call attention to Iran's human rights violations and attach meaningful international sanctions. Unfortunately, the bill did not proceed beyond first reading.

Today I think all honourable senators, and hopefully all members in the other place as well, recognize the wisdom of Mr. Cotler's plan. I encourage all honourable senators to look at the draft bill.

There is one other document I must mention. In December 2010, the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in the other place issued an important report entitled *Ahmadinejad's Iran: A Threat to Peace, Human Rights and International Law*. That report, adopted unanimously by all committee members, contained a number of important findings and recommendations. It called for comprehensive sanctions targeting those engaged in the massive repression in Iran and for the listing of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist entity.

Honourable senators, I conclude by thanking Senator Frum once again for initiating this inquiry. It is an important step that shows we are all of one mind in defending basic human rights in Iran and in condemning those who would so flagrantly deny them.

Hon. Jim Munson: Honourable senators, I too congratulate Senator Frum on her inquiry condemning human rights violations in Iran. As heart-wrenching as it was to hear the stories many of our colleagues told last week of Iranian citizens unlawfully imprisoned and tortured, I am nonetheless thankful. Senator Frum's inquiry to condemn human rights abuses in Iran could not be more relevant, and I appreciate her initiative as well as this opportunity today to express my revulsion with that country's ruling power.

In 1987, as I said last week, and it is difficult to talk about those days, I was on assignment in Iran to cover the Persian Gulf War and the story of a Canadian engineer being held in Evin Prison. I stood outside the walls of that prison under the open sky, free to observe the activities taking place in front of me. While there

was certainly a difference between what I saw and what I was restricted from seeing on the other side of those walls, that difference was not as stark as you might assume.

Daily life in Iran is fraught with restrictions. What can it be like to live in a country where women and girls are not allowed to even choose what they wear and where you can be seized from your home, held, questioned and tortured, without even hearing your alleged crimes? What does it do to the human psyche to have to constantly conform to the government's socio-religious norms or risk punishment, and not just your own punishment because the risks extend to your family and friends?

As a reporter with the responsibility to get the story and share it, I felt conspicuous and wary. Whereas Iran's belief system was foreign and offensive to me, there I was, the foreigner; and 25 years later, Iran's human rights crisis is worsening every day. Despite the government's severe restrictions over independent reporting and monitoring, we have more than enough information to put together a clear and ugly picture. According to Sarah Leah Whitson, the Middle East Director of Human Rights Watch, the Iranian government crushes all voices of opposition while scoffing at the international community's growing concern over human rights.

World Report 2012, a publication of Human Rights Watch, provides overwhelming evidence of the systemic and ruthless nature of human rights abuses in Iran. As Senator Cowan mentioned, despite the urgings of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and four UN experts for a moratorium on the death penalty, Iranian authorities carried out more than 600 executions in the past year.

Limits on rights and freedoms abound, but as for limits on the horrible powers of Iranian authorities, there simply are none. Iranian law allows capital punishment for people who have reached puberty. What exactly does this mean? In Iran, people who have reached puberty, honourable senators, are 15 years of age for boys and 9 years of age for girls. In 2011, the Iranian courts allowed three children to be executed. What must it be like to grow up in a country where self-expression carries grave risks and to know right now that the situation in your country is getting worse?

Following the 2009 presidential election, the government issued a crackdown on anti-government protest. That crackdown is still in effect, and social activists, including women's rights advocates, lawyers, students and journalists, are being targeted. Honourable senators who stood last week to condemn human rights violations in Iran highlighted in their statements the ordeals of various individuals. We heard of men and women, all of them distinct in their personal and work lives, yet also connected because they are among those who have suffered and continue to suffer as a result of Iran's intense security sweep.

Now, as the country moves towards its next parliamentary elections on March 2, human rights advocates in Iran and

throughout the world are on high alert. Past and current experiences tell us that these elections will be a sham, yet another slap in the face of democracy. It could also lead to a violent conflict between police and protesters.

• (1640)

In the face of this crisis, we need to remember that it is the respect for human rights and freedoms that makes Canada and like-minded countries throughout the world strong. Iran's egregious system of government betrays a fear of its people. A government that spits on the rights of its citizens is a country propped up by cowardice.

This challenge can be met and Canada is among a formidable united group of nations and international mechanisms that can do it. We must pursue any and every reasonable avenue, including tightening sanctions. Iran's leaders may say what they want about self-reliance and resentment toward the West, but their words are bravado.

Speaking to a group of editors for *The New York Times* last week, Mohammad Khazaei, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, acknowledged that the sanctions are cutting deep. He said:

The good news is that we have learned very much how to manage with sanctions. But nobody can say that the sanctions are not hurting.

I am a firm believer that any official role Canada takes must be through the United Nations. Though we are starting to hear the drum beat of war, we must remain grounded and be careful about the role we will take.

The inquiry by Senator Frum is a good inquiry. It addresses the issue of human rights. An inquiry like this shows that senators on both sides of the chamber can and do agree. The Iranian Government is an abusive regime that kills and tortures its citizens. In their statements, Conservative senators were able to put faces to the abuses: real people trying to live real lives.

We must never turn our backs; we must never turn away from them. We must always voice our opinions and believe that one day Iran will recognize and guarantee the fundamental rights of its people and Iranians will be free — free to worship; free to think; free to love; free to wear what they want to wear; and free to know that, when they place their votes, they are helping to shape a better future for themselves and for generations to come and that they are creating a real democracy.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Jaffer, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, February 15, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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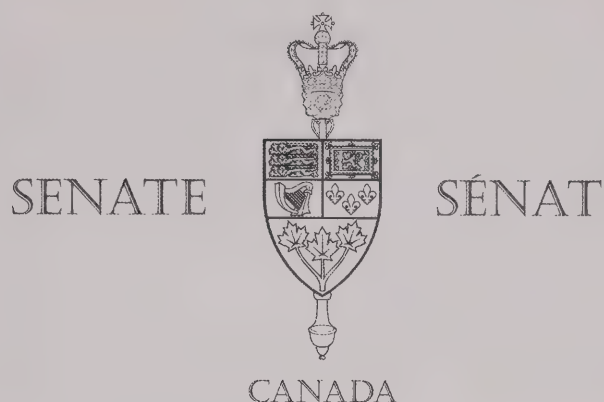
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(HANSARD)



Wednesday, February 15, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before calling for Senators' Statements, I wish to once again remind you that the Diamond Jubilee book that will be delivered to Her Majesty next week at Buckingham Palace will be removed from the foyer because it has to be taken to the bookbinder this afternoon. Honourable senators who have yet to sign it, please do so out in the foyer before 4 p.m. this afternoon.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION RALLY

Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck: Honourable senators, on February 1, I attended the Canadian Federation of Students National Day of Action Rally, a student rally organized by the Indigenous Students Association at the First Nations University of Canada in Regina, Saskatchewan. Joined with other students at the University of Regina, First Nations University students, professors and student leaders demanded that the federal government remove the 2 per cent cap on Aboriginal post-secondary education and live up to the treaty right to education.

As honourable senators know, through the recent succession of studies on Aboriginal education, first by the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, and just last week by the national panel on education, a distinct and significant funding gap exists between First Nations students on-reserve and those in the provincial school system. This gap is institutionalized in policy when it comes to post-secondary education because of the 2 per cent cap on the Post-Secondary Student Support Program. This program supports First Nations students who attend post-secondary institutions.

According to the National Education Council and the Assembly of First Nations, from 2001 to 2006, an estimated 10,500 students did not have access to post-secondary education due to the lack of funding. They were flat out denied funding for their post-secondary studies because the amount of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program funds has been capped since 1996. In Saskatchewan alone, approximately 1,000 students were denied funding for the 2009-10 academic year. The number of students this program funds has steadily declined from 22,930 students in the 1997-98 academic year to only 18,729 students in the 2009-10 academic year.

The federal government, through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, has in effect put a cap on the future prosperity of First Nations youth and their ability to contribute to their communities.

Honourable senators know that education is a key component in helping to solve problems that beset First Nations communities in Canada. Furthermore, investment in the education of Aboriginal youth, the fastest growing demographic in Canada, would result in a positive impact on the Canadian economy as a whole.

Honourable senators, these students demanded that the 2 per cent cap on Post-Secondary Student Support Program funding for First Nations students be removed and have sent a letter to Minister Duncan outlining their demands.

I commend the students for their actions and support their demands for the removal of the 2 per cent cap on funding for the Post-Secondary Student Support program from the federal government. As Little Black Bear First Nation Chief Perry Bellegarde stated at the rally, "We're First Nations people being treated like second-class citizens, living in Third World conditions in the fourth-best country to live in in the world, and that is not acceptable in 2012."

Honourable senators, it is time for Canada to honour the treaty right to education.

WORLD CANCER DAY

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators:

Cancer is on the minds of all Canadians. Over 80 per cent of Canadians list cancer as their greatest health concern, but they are often at a loss when it comes to knowing how to prevent it.

We know that public policies, environmental regulation, public education, healthy diet, physical activity, infection control, patient empowerment and medical advances all play critical roles in reducing the burden of cancer.

Honourable senators, those words I have just quoted are the words of the late Nova Scotia Senator Fred Dickson, who lost his battle with cancer last week. Senator Dickson was a good friend and a man of great integrity who served his country as well. He was a strong promoter of cancer awareness, research and prevention. It is therefore with a heavy heart that I rise today to call your attention to February 4, World Cancer Day. This year's theme was "Together it is Possible."

[Translation]

On February 4, individuals, organizations and governments met to increase public awareness of cancer. Statistics show that 600,000 people in the world die of cancer every month.

[English]

According to the *Canadian Cancer Statistics 2011* report, it is estimated that there have been 75,000 deaths from cancer and nearly 178,000 new cases of cancer in 2011. Forty per cent of women and 45 per cent of men in Canada will develop cancer in their lifetimes, and approximately one out of every four Canadians will die from it.

Among Canadian men, prostate cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer. It is estimated that 25,500 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer last year. One in seven men will develop prostate cancer during his lifetime. One in 28 will die from it.

Honourable senators, I am one of those seven men, and I am blessed to be a survivor.

According to the American Cancer Society, “cancers that can be prevented or detected early by screening account for at least half of all the new cancer cases.” This indicates just how important cancer prevention, early detection and health promotion programs are — something Senator Dickson strongly advocated.

Honourable senators may remember that the Conservative government created the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer in November 2006. Its work includes cancer prevention and screening, research and supportive care. On March 11, 2011, Prime Minister Harper renewed the government’s funding to the partnership until 2017. He said:

The funding announced today is part of our government’s commitment to keep Canadians and their families healthy, to help doctors detect cancer sooner and to give health care workers, support groups and survivors the help that they need to fight back.

• (1340)

Honourable senators, most Canadians have been affected by cancer in one way or another. In honour of Senator Dickson, please join me in stressing the importance of early cancer detection, treatment and prevention programs across Canada. We, as a society, must unite in our fight against cancer and reduce overall cancer incidence and mortality. In keeping with the theme of World Cancer Day, “Together it is possible.”

[Translation]

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE KARIM AGA KHAN

CONGRATULATIONS ON HONORARY DEGREE

Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, on Friday, January 13, His Royal Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, spiritual leader of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, received an honorary doctorate from the University of Ottawa for his service to humanity.

For over 50 years, His Royal Highness the Aga Khan has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life of people living in the poorest and most disadvantaged areas of the world,

particularly Africa, Central and South Asia and the Middle East. Allan Rock, President of the University of Ottawa, said the following about the Aga Khan’s accomplishments:

His Highness speaks directly to the goodness in all people. By his words and actions, he has demonstrated that there are no divisions among us if our desire truly is to create a better world.

Honourable senators, when speaking to the people assembled at the graduation ceremony, His Highness shared several important messages, some of which pertain directly to the work that we do in this institution. In his speech, which focused mainly on governance and public policy, His Highness talked about the challenges facing many developing countries that are seeking to establish sustainable democracies and constitutional systems. He also emphasized how important it is to remember that solutions that may work in more affluent societies may not work in developing countries. This must be taken into account when we provide assistance to developing countries in the area of governance. We must adapt our solutions to individual countries, taking into account their history and the realities that define them.

Honourable senators, His Highness the Aga Khan recently selected Canada to direct a number of high-profile projects, namely an Ismaili centre, a museum and a park in Toronto, as well as the Global Centre for Pluralism located here in Ottawa.

We must remember why His Highness chose Canada to implement these very important projects. To end his speech, His Highness made this very profound statement:

In my experience, a country’s standing in our contemporary world is no longer recognized by what it can achieve for itself, but by what it can do for others. In this context, Canada has truly become a great world power.

Honourable senators, His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan has put his trust in our country because he believes that Canada is a fair and tolerant nation that takes pride in equality. Let us continue to work hard and strengthen these values.

[English]

CANADIAN FORCES

AFGHANISTAN MISSION

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I wish to pay tribute today to our Canadian Forces who continue to do an incredible job in Afghanistan training Afghan security forces.

On Monday, the Defence Committee was briefed by Lieutenant-General Stuart Beare and Major-General Jonathan Vance, just as some 450 troops of the Second Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment in Galetown said their goodbyes to loved ones and deployed to Afghanistan, the second Canadian rotation in the training mission there.

[Senator Oliver]

Soon, some 500 soldiers from across Canada will also deploy, including a good number of reservists who offer their special civilian skills to the forces.

Our recent committee report stated emphatically that reservists make a vital contribution. That report was approved by both sides, but it is now delayed here in the chamber by the opposition.

Honourable senators, our trainers are finishing the original Afghan mission, that is, to make Afghans ready and able to defend and protect themselves. Today, they number more than 310,000 on track to meet the objective of 352,000 Afghan security forces by this fall.

In just two years, there has been a tremendous increase in quantity, quality and capacity. Two years ago, there was no mandatory national literacy program for Afghans. Now, 130,000 Afghan army and police members are in or have completed full-time literacy programs. As Lieutenant-General Beare says:

Going from zero to one in reading and writing — just recognizing a number or letter — is a human capital investment beyond description.

Though our effort is centered in Kabul, there are more than 30 training centres across the country. On any given day, there are up to 25,000 army personnel and 10,000 to 15,000 police actually in training.

Canadian Forces and Canadian police officers continue to do us proud. They are not only training Afghans to be soldiers and policemen — or police woman, which is increasingly the case — but they are also training Afghan officers to lead and teachers to teach and to go on to train their own leaders and teachers. The true benefit, though, is not just that Afghans are becoming literate soldiers or police officers, but that they are becoming role models and heroes in their home communities, able to finally push aside the tyranny of the Taliban and the deep-pocketed drug lords. We thank the men and women of this country who serve the larger world.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

MRS. EVELINA UPSHAW

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, in this Black History Month, I rise to pay tribute to Mrs. Evelina Upshaw of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Born in Windsor Plains, Hants County, Nova Scotia, she was married at 19 years of age and is a mother who brought up her six children as a single parent when her husband left home. She moved to the Mulgrave Park neighbourhood of Halifax 50 years ago. There she raised her family and lifted a Black community through food and prayer, kindness and wisdom.

Despite her humble circumstances, Mrs. Upshaw has fed children who might not otherwise eat. She has spoken out for her Black community and has been a tireless visitor of the sick and dying. She has been a proud member of Cornwallis Street Baptist church for more than 50 years, singing in its choir and

volunteering for 33 years in its hot lunch program for kids who were going without food because their parents were at work. For years, Mrs. Upshaw planned and prepared meals herself, cooking for up to 130 kids each morning while her own children were at school. Today, at a youthful 84 years, with her fellow volunteer Liz Jackson, she serves up to 80 brown bag breakfasts each weekday morning to kids in Mulgrave Park.

Mrs. Upshaw also passes out some lessons on behaviour and respect with her food. All children must wash their hands before eating and thank the Lord for the food they receive. She will not allow swearing or fighting, or throwing food or unkind words. She has thousands of kids in her extended family, and decades later those recipients of Mrs. Upshaw's kindness still call her "mom." She continues to try to put young people in the right place.

Affectionately known as the Queen of Mulgrave Park, Mrs. Evelina Upshaw is a true role model for all races, and a real heroine.

[Translation]

HOOKED ON SCHOOL DAYS

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable senators, today I would like to draw to your attention Quebec's Hooked on School Days, intended to raise awareness of the high dropout rate among boys, particularly in Quebec. That is why a number of Quebec senators are wearing the school perseverance ribbon today.

The green and white ribbon symbolizes the value of staying in school and a commitment to supporting school perseverance. Green stands for youth and hope. It represents young people, who need to be recognized and acknowledged in order to stay in school. White, a blend of all colours, represents the community that contributes to the development of its young people. The intertwining of the two ribbons illustrates the ties that unite young people and the community. The loop, open-ended, holds the promise of a better future.

• (1350)

People who wear the perseverance ribbon show their commitment to supporting young people in their efforts and in their academic success.

I invite all senators to wear the green and white ribbon.

[English]

NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA DAY

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, 47 years ago today we witnessed the birth of our greatest national symbol. This is National Flag Day of Canada. Since then, the red and white Maple Leaf, Canada's national flag, has become a symbol of hope, tolerance and democracy as seen on flag poles, backpacks and even on combat uniforms of our brave men and women serving overseas and at home.

My dad, a veteran of World War II and a career soldier who joined the army in 1929, as well as my father-in-law who joined the army in 1928 and also served six years overseas, fought under the Red Ensign. In so doing, they had a difficult question to solve in regard to accepting the red maple leaf as the national symbol. However, they turned warmly to it and it took little to no time for them to accept that that is the symbol of Canada into the future, which we should be proud to serve under and also make the sacrifices needed to advance what we believe in: tolerance, hope, respect and democracy.

I am proud to pay specific tribute to this great flag and to one great Canadian in particular who made this possible: Lieutenant-Colonel John Ross Matheson, Judge Matheson, born in Arundel, Quebec, in 1917. John Matheson was a student when the Second World War broke out. He trained at the Royal Military College of Canada and served with the 1st Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, my old regiment, in Italy. On December 1, 1943, he was wounded by six pieces of shrapnel while crossing the Moro River.

After returning from war, Major Matheson's injuries left him paraplegic and epileptic. However, he pursued careers in law and politics. He served as a Liberal member of Parliament from 1961 to 1968. During that time, and under the leadership of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, Mr. Matheson was the driving force behind the committee responsible for selecting the new flag of Canada.

He was instrumental in choosing the current maple leaf design and is referred to by many as the father of the Canadian flag. The inspiration for the flag came to him while looking over MacKenzie Building at the Royal Military College and seeing the flag of that college flying. That college flag has the two red symbols on the extents and the royal military college emblem in the centre. It was from that red, the army red, that the flag built its conceptual design that was ultimately accepted as the Canadian Maple Leaf, the Canadian flag.

Judge Matheson's achievements are individually impressive — together, they are truly exceptional. Please join me in celebrating this remarkable Canadian, this decorated and injured veteran, this judge of the courts who brought enormous stability to our nation and a point of great recognition to our future and our future endeavours with his most recognizable accomplishment. We thank him and we wish him well in his continued good health.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF WESTBANK FIRST NATION SELF-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT FOR 2008-10 TABLED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Westbank First Nation Self-Government Agreement Annual Report on Implementation 2008-10.

[Senator Dallaire]

[Translation]

STATE OF INUIT CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN THE NUNAVUT SETTLEMENT AREA—2009-10 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2009-10 Annual Report on the State of Inuit Culture and Society in the Nunavut Settlement Area.

CRIMINAL CODE CANADA EVIDENCE ACT SECURITY OF INFORMATION ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): introduced Bill S-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act.

(Bill read first time.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

(On motion of Senator Carignan, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[English]

SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITIES BILL

PRESENTATION OF PETITION

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I have the honour to present a petition from the residents of Canada calling on the government to withdraw Bill C-10, the proposed Safe Streets and Communities Act, as it fails to address, among other things, the over-incarceration of First Nations people. It will cost the taxpayers billions of dollars, it will take away judges' discretion when sentencing offenders and it ignores the underlying social issues that lead to crime.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

[Translation]

QUESTION PERIOD

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION FUNDING

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The national panel mandated to

evaluate First Nations elementary and secondary education, created by the federal government and the Assembly of First Nations, released a report last week recommending positive measures for First Nations education.

The panel's recommendations come in addition to several reports released over the past few years that reiterate what everyone already knows: First Nations communities lack a truly organized education system, and resources and investments earmarked for students on reserves are significantly less than those earmarked for students in provincial school systems. An earlier report calculated that First Nations schools receive between \$2,000 and \$3,000 less per student than provincially run schools.

The government has all the facts it needs to rectify the situation and develop a funding formula tailored to the needs of First Nations students and communities.

Madam leader, what is your government waiting for to eliminate the gap in funding for First Nations education?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank the honourable senator for the question. I hasten to add that there was also an excellent report prepared by the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, which I am sure Senator Tardif would have wanted to acknowledge and support.

We have obviously received the recommendations of the panel. The government, most particularly the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, is working now to quickly study these recommendations. As I have said before, with regard to Aboriginal education, this is something that the government will work on in partnership with our Aboriginal leaders and communities.

As honourable senators know, we have signed five education partnership agreements with the provinces and First Nations. In January, Minister Duncan was proud to sign the British Columbia First Nations Tripartite Education Framework Agreement. This was a very good program in which to participate. There is every indication that very good results will come of it. Since coming to office, the government has built 22 new schools; and last month, it tendered for a new school in Attawapiskat.

• (1400)

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: The panel finds that most First Nations schools clearly do not have enough resources to help their students succeed. They have fewer books and computers, classrooms are overcrowded, and there is a huge disparity in the salaries of the teachers and principals.

Given the extent of the current underfunding and the urgency of the situation, the panel is recommending immediate financial measures.

My question is simple: will the government follow through on these urgent recommendations in the next budget in order to reduce the growing gap in education funding for Aboriginal children?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: The government acknowledges, as did the report, that serious issues need to be addressed. The Crown-First Nations meeting held in late January focused almost exclusively on economic opportunities and education for Aboriginal youth. The government takes this matter seriously. Significant progress has been made. I assure honourable senators that the government realizes the severity of the issue. The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development and his parliamentary secretary will take measures as quickly as possible to address these many concerns.

Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck: Honourable senators, this is a critically important issue. I would like to provide a concrete example of the funding gap and how it affects teachers' salaries in Saskatchewan.

As reported in *The Globe and Mail* last week and on CBC Radio, the principal of the school on Waterhen Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan, Mr. John Walter, said that the funding is so critical that he has to choose between firing some of his teaching staff or asking them all to take a pay cut, which of course he should not have to do. Senator Tardif talked about the lack of resources. Mr. Walter has to cut programs and put together his own computers.

Despite all of that, the school program is succeeding. This year, they will graduate six students from high school, and their success rate in math has increased. Two years ago, none of the students were performing at grade level, but today, 33 per cent are meeting that standard. Mr. Walter said that if he cannot keep his teachers, in particular the experienced teachers who cost more because they have been teaching longer, then that success rate is at risk. He is truly in a dilemma. Like many other on-reserve schools and principals, he cannot match the salary that a comparable teacher would receive if they taught at the provincial level off reserve.

Mr. Walter has been told by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada that there will not be additional funding for salary increases for his teachers. What is he to do? What will the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development do about this funding gap, in particular for Waterhen Lake school in Saskatchewan? What will the government do? Will it fail this school and not provide the funding to retain those experienced teachers?

Senator LeBreton: The honourable senator has brought to the attention of this place the situation in one school. All of the things that she put on the record, and she cites one example, are reflective of the situation in many communities across the country.

There is no doubt, honourable senators, that we cannot tolerate young people in our Aboriginal communities leaving communities and not being properly educated. The honourable senator participated in and supported a Senate study, and the government has received the report and the recommendations of the national aboriginal education panel. The government takes

these recommendations very seriously. The minister is working extremely hard and realizes that there is a grave problem. The government will not sit by and watch this situation deteriorate further.

The government is committed. It was clear at the Crown-First Nations meeting at the end of January that the government and the Aboriginal leadership are one and the same on this issue. They recognize that in order to pull communities out of the existing conditions, first and foremost proper education must be provided for young people.

Senator Dyck: I agree with the leader that this is a critical situation and that I used only one school as an example. However, the national report also states clearly that the situation is critical and that in the meantime funding pressures should be relieved in First Nations schools through increases that are equal to those of provincial schools serving similar locations and regions with similar needs.

The question is: What will the government do in the next budget? Will it be possible to equalize, at the very least, the teachers' salaries, which are critical to the successful education of students? We are not asking for everything but can the leader at least say that the government will put aside money to equalize the teachers' salaries?

Senator LeBreton: As the honourable senator would understand, I am not in a position to divulge various components of the budget. The Minister of Finance and other ministers are in the consultation process to ensure that all views are incorporated in the deliberations and ultimately in the budget.

I can assure honourable senators that the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, is fully committed and engaged and is working hard within government and with his Aboriginal partners to alleviate what up until this point has been a very unacceptable situation.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

CANADA EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FINANCING BOARD

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In 2010 the government set up the Canada Employment Insurance Financing Board, which was to oversee the financing of the EI system. It was to set the premiums, to invest any surplus, and to manage a \$2 billion contingency fund.

Well, here is the situation. The government has arbitrarily set the rates of premiums, there is no surplus, and there is no contingency fund because the government has failed to set it up. However, this board managed to spend over \$2.2 million in less than two years. They even moved into more spacious offices. Why is the government spending millions on an office that cannot fulfill its function?

[Senator LeBreton]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, this is a rather interesting question to receive from the other side considering that in the mid-1990s the previous government completely drained all of the excess funds from the Employment Insurance fund and cut the transfers to provinces to bring down the deficit.

• (1410)

With regard to the board, honourable senators, I do not have an answer to the question, so I will take it as notice.

Senator Callbeck: Certainly it seems to me that we have a serious problem here, because we have a government that is closing processing centres across the country. In fact, the only processing centre in Prince Edward Island will be closed. At the same time, we are hearing reports that people are waiting longer to get their EI cheques. However, even though we are closing centres, we are spending millions of dollars on this Canada Employment Insurance Financing Board; and in fact, the chair of the board, David Brown, admitted that the board is not fulfilling its mandate.

When does the government expect the Canada Employment Insurance Financing Board will begin performing its function or its intended role?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I already answered the honourable senator's questions in the past about the EI system and moving it from a paper-based system to an electronic system. I already indicated in this place that extra people were hired to help in this transition and also to deal with the seasonal increases with regard to EI.

With regard to the board itself, as I indicated a moment ago, I will take the question as notice.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

SERVICES IN ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION

Hon. Don Meredith: As honourable senators know, in December I raised concerns about the escalating situation in Attawapiskat and the issue of our working together to ensure that we find solutions. Can the leader advise the Senate as to what improvements have been made to the lives of these First Nations people?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, to set the record straight, Senator Meredith asked me this question previously. Since I now have good news about Attawapiskat, people will assume it is a planted question, when it is not. I assure honourable senators that Senator Meredith asks tough questions like this all the time.

I do have good news about Attawapiskat. Recognizing the need to alleviate the housing situation, as honourable senators know, our government has been moving houses across the ice road. Of course, then there was the question of having the houses properly

installed. Minister Duncan did offer the band council additional financial and logistical help in getting the sites ready. The chief of the band has now responded very positively, and we will be working with the third-party manager to ensure that the work is done as quickly and as soon as possible.

In the meantime, as I think Minister Duncan has indicated in the other place and which has been reported on national news networks, the healing lodge has been set up and is providing warm accommodation for people who are in need. The good news — and I just received this news today — is that now the band council and the third party that has been named to oversee the project are working together to ensure that these houses are properly installed and that people move into decent housing.

Senator Meredith: There is still a lack of preparation for these homes. The leader is absolutely correct — I have read this as well — that Minister Duncan has indicated that he has offered them other expertise. Could the leader elaborate on how this will expedite the movement of people into their homes?

Senator LeBreton: I think the answer is quite clear. The chief has agreed to work collaboratively with the band council, the third-party oversight and the government. Equipment is there now preparing sites for these homes. Of course, as honourable senators know, there are only so many homes that can be moved over the ice roads. They are moving them in as quickly as possible. Now there is cooperation from all sides to prepare the sites and have the homes constructed as quickly as possible so that the families can move in.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

SECURITY OF F-35 AIRCRAFT TECHNOLOGY

Hon. Wilfred P. Moore: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Yesterday, I asked a question about Chinese espionage driving up the cost of the F-35 fighter jet program for all the partners. The Pentagon in the United States of America is saying they will not pick up the costs associated with that espionage and that industry is responsible for absorbing these additional costs. This sounds like a slippery slope as far as the F-35 program is concerned, already at twice the cost per unit and delayed six years.

The untendered maker of the aircraft, Lockheed Martin, confirmed that it became aware of China's hacking into the F-35 technology three years ago. Was Canada, which is an investor in that technology development, advised of that cyber-theft when its American partner became aware of it?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I thank the honourable senator for the question and will take it as notice.

Senator Moore: Has the Minister of National Defence or the Prime Minister been aware of the fact that the Chinese were responsible for compromising the F-35 program technology, which is, as I said yesterday, a matter of Canadian national security?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, as with any question about security, obviously I would not be privy to such information. I cannot answer that question, honourable senators. Any questions about cyber-security or related topics would be a matter of national security, and I doubt very much that I would ever be in a position to have that kind of information. However, I will take the question as notice.

Senator Moore: Could the leader please find out whether Mr. Harper took issue with the Chinese leadership over this cyber-theft during his visit to China last week?

Senator LeBreton: Yesterday, when Senator Moore asked the question, I think he was using as the basis for his question *Aviation Week* magazine in the United States. He is asking questions based on information in a magazine. I do not think that Senator Moore can stand and ask a question with absolute certainty that these events happened. I would have no way of knowing whether such events did occur. I think the honourable senator would understand that no official and no government could possibly respond in any detail with regard to the security of our country. He could not expect me, or any of us, to have that kind of information. I certainly do not believe that any of us would want to make allegations against anyone based on a magazine story.

While the honourable senator may believe his information fervently, I think the basis of his question causes some concerns. There is nothing further I can say other than that I will simply pass on his questions. However, I cannot promise that he will get an answer.

Senator Moore: Honourable senators, it is not just a magazine story; it is a matter of Lockheed Martin, the producer, saying this, and it is a matter of U.S. military officials saying this.

As a country that has invested in this technology, I would have thought that we would have been apprised of the situation — and that would have been three years ago; this is not just last week — and that, if our government knew, either the Prime Minister or some of his officials would have taken it up with them, if not beforehand, then certainly upon the opportunity that presented itself last week.

Honourable senators, yesterday I mentioned that Lockheed Martin also reported that six of its subcontractors who worked on the F-35 were totally compromised due to this hacking.

• (1420)

Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate please advise whether any of these subcontractors were Canadian companies?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I will take that question as notice.

FINANCE

STATE OF ECONOMY

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, I came across an article in the *Huffington Post* stating that Moody's and Fitch both questioned the need for Canada's austerity measures, and I quote:

Steven Hess, the lead Canada analyst for Moody's, told the Wall Street Journal that there is a "risk to growth" if the government moves too quickly with austerity measures designed to return the country to balanced budgets.

With a budget deficit that amounts to about two per cent of GDP, there is "no rush" for Canada to address the problem, Hess said.

"You don't have to swallow an extremely bitter pill if you are not sick," Fitch Ratings analyst Shelly Shetty told the Journal. She suggested any acceleration of spending cuts to beat the 2016 deadline was "not required."

The government has often sung praises of these two rating agencies when they evaluated Canada's finances. They have now proven that the government is too incompetent to deal with the economy. They may think that they are tough on crime, but they are definitely soft on the economy. When will the government take concrete measures aimed at strengthening the economy instead of sending us down the path of Southern European countries?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, she is so predictable, is she not?

The fact of the matter is that our government was elected with a strong mandate. We campaigned on several issues, and one was jobs and the economy. We are working very hard. The minister is consulting widely with various organizations, businesses, provinces and territories on the budget, which will come in due course.

Of course the other area where the government campaigned very vigorously, as was well understood by everyone, was cracking down on criminals and ensuring that Canadians could live safely in their communities.

We are simply following through, honourable senators, on our commitments. It was clearly understood that this is what we were going to do. It was all out there for people to digest. We were given a very strong mandate and will continue to work to build the economy, create jobs, create an environment for industry and business to flourish in this country, and we will also pay attention to those victimized by crimes and not the criminals.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, if there was a competition for predictability, I think the leader would win for sure.

I would like to ask my question this time in French.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, the government's economic action plan claims that its top priority is the economy and jobs. So far, the only thing the Reform government has given Canadians is expensive and unnecessary bills, new prisons, Internet spying without a warrant, exorbitantly expensive F-35s, the elimination of the firearms registry, use of information obtained through torture, a lost seat on the UN Security Council, and our withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, with shameful partisanship on parliamentary committees to boot, and the list goes on.

What specifically will the government do, apart from building prisons and buying planes that will not be built in Canada? When will the government do what it claims it wants to do and put the economy at the top of its priority list?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, that is the usual litany, and that kind of attitude is the reason the honourable senator's party is sitting in third position in the other place.

The fact is the government is operating very clearly on a jobs and economy strategy. Since the economic downturn in 2009-10, 610,000 new jobs have been created. With regard to our crime legislation, the senator knows full well, and the statistics bear it out, that in terms of dealing with criminals we were supported by Canadians. The honourable senator may find that difficult. Of course she would have the "Trudeaupian" view of Canada. The arrogance of her colleague in the other place is quite remarkable. This was Justin Trudeau, who was coming to restore the nobility of Parliament, by the way.

That kind of attitude and the preamble to the question is indicative of why what we are doing — which we were honest about and put out in the election campaign — won the election. I would suggest to her that she accept the judgment of the Canadian public and if she wishes to challenge any of these that she come up with proposals of her own.

Many of the things that Senator Hervieux-Payette is now criticizing she either voted against in the other place or supported.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: I am sorry, but the leader seems to have a short memory. I will remind her that at some point in our history they had only two members of Parliament sitting, and now they form the government. I think history will teach the honourable senator to be a little more modest.

What is the government doing to give jobs to those they are firing in departments like Environment Canada, Statistics Canada and in all the other departments? They are prepared to send these individuals into unemployment. Where will the government find jobs for these people?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): First, I am very humble and modest about the hard work put in on this side to regain the confidence of the Canadian public. Everyone worked extremely hard, and the Canadian public rewarded us. I would suggest to the honourable senator that her party will probably have to go through a similar exercise.

With regard to the rumoured savings that the government will be making throughout the various departments, all departments, as honourable senators know, have presented areas to the government where they think savings can take place.

I think it is acknowledged throughout the government, and certainly supported in the country, that we work our way through the economic downturn. Many of the programs that the government initiated in the stimulus package were widely supported and urged upon us by all.

Everyone has to do their bit, honourable senators, and I think everyone is prepared to do so. I hasten to add that in this country we have many areas where there are labour shortages. There is a lack of trained and skilled workers. When we go through this process of bringing down the deficit, I do believe that there will be many opportunities available for all Canadians. The important thing is to get the economy back on solid footing, which creates jobs.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the answers to two oral questions. The first was asked by the Honourable Senator Munson on November 22, 2011, concerning the creation of the position of a federal Children's Commissioner, and the second was asked by the Honourable Senator Callbeck on December 13, 2011, concerning civil legal aid.

CANADIAN HERITAGE

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

(Response to question raised by Hon. Jim Munson on November 22, 2011)

On December 9, 2009, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights to discuss the implementation of recommendations contained in the Committee's report entitled *Children: The Silenced Citizens: Effective Implementation of Canada's International Obligations with Respect to the Rights of Children*. During his appearance, the minister undertook to provide a written response to questions regarding the creation of a federal Children's Commissioner. In June 2010, a written response was sent to the Honourable Janis G. Johnson, then Chair of the Committee.

The minister wants to reiterate that the Government of Canada recognizes the importance of protecting the rights of children and youth in Canada. The protection of children against all forms of sexual exploitation remains a continuing priority for the Government of Canada.

Bill C-10, the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*, introduced on September 20, 2011, proposes criminal law reforms to uniformly and clearly condemn all acts of child sexual abuse and exploitation through the imposition of mandatory sentences of imprisonment that clearly reflect the serious nature of these crimes; and to prevent the commission of sexual offences against children. These reforms include increasing the mandatory minimum penalties for nine existing child sexual offences including for making and distributing child pornography on summary conviction, imposing seven new mandatory minimum sentences for other sexual offences involving child victims, and creating two new related offences that will also carry mandatory minimum sentences.

On December 8, 2011, the *Protecting Children from Online Sexual Exploitation Act* came into force. It creates a new national statutory requirement for those who provide Internet services to the public to report online child pornography to designated authorities where it is brought to their attention or where they discover it themselves on their service. This new mandatory reporting requirement will enhance law enforcement's ability to detect potential child pornography offences, thereby helping to reduce the availability of online child pornography and facilitate the identification and rescue of child victims, as well as the identification of offenders for the purpose of investigation and prosecution.

Many issues relating to children fall within the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories. Most provinces have already established independent children's commissioners, advocates or ombudspersons. The Government of Canada places a high value on their work.

Mechanisms are in place to make sure that all orders of government — federal, provincial and territorial — coordinate their efforts in an effective way so Canada meets its obligations to safeguard children's rights.

The Government of Canada endeavours to strengthen coordination and monitoring of children's rights through interdepartmental and intergovernmental initiatives, such as the Continuing Committee of Officials on Human Rights and the federal Interdepartmental Working Group on Children's Rights. The Interdepartmental Working Group on Children's Rights was created in 2007 to promote a whole-of-government approach to children's rights and to encourage collaboration among federal departments.

Cooperation among jurisdictions is essential to ensure that children are a priority. Federal, provincial, and territorial governments will continue to consult on issues related to children.

JUSTICE

CIVIL LEGAL AID

(Response to question raised by Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck on December 13, 2011)

The Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada is in regular communication with his provincial and territorial counterparts on a number of issues related to Canada's

justice system, including legal aid. Furthermore, federal/provincial/territorial Ministers of Justice gather annually to exchange ideas, suggestions and best practices. The most recent of these meetings took place in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, January 24 to 26, 2012. Legal aid remains an important issue for all levels of government and will continue to be discussed at every appropriate opportunity.

[Translation]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MODERNIZE AND STANDARDIZE THE LAWS THAT REGULATE THE MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY— DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Raine, seconded by the Honourable Senator Andreychuk:

That the Senate call upon the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry, which is poised for market growth in North America and overseas, and which provides consumers with a natural and nutritious agricultural product that has become a symbol of Canada;

That the Government of Canada should do this by amending the Maple Products Regulations, in accordance with the September 2011 recommendations of the International Maple Syrup Institute in its document entitled "Regulatory Proposal to Standardize the Grades and Nomenclature for Pure Maple Syrup in the North American and World Marketplace", for the purpose of

- (a) adopting a uniform definition as to what constitutes pure maple syrup;
- (b) contributing toward the development of an international standard for maple syrup, as it has become very apparent that the timing for the introduction of such a standard is ideal;
- (c) eliminating non-tariff measures that are not found in the international standard that may be used as a barrier to trade such as container sizes and shapes;
- (d) modernizing and standardizing the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup sold in domestic, import and export markets and through interprovincial trade, thereby eliminating the current patchwork system of grades that is confusing and fails to explain to consumers in meaningful terms important differences between grades and colour classes;
- (e) benefiting both marketing and sales for an industry that is mature, highly organized and well positioned for growth;
- (f) enhancing Canadian production and sales, which annually constitutes in excess of 80% of the world's annual maple products output; and
- (g) upholding and enhancing quality and safety standards as they pertain to maple products;

[English]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, I rise on a point of order. Earlier today in her excellent statement, Senator Wallin made one point that caught me up. She suggested that members of the opposition were delaying the progress of the Defence Committee's recent report on the militia called *Answering the Call: The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserve*. I just wanted to address that and set the record straight.

• (1430)

It is ironic in two ways that she would have done that. The first irony is, in fact, I had prepared comments and I was going to present those in that debate on Tuesday or Wednesday, but because of the nature of the meeting that she ran on Monday night, I determined that I needed to change my comments. That meeting was an excellent meeting. She ran it very, very effectively. She showed respect to both sides of the committee, and I congratulate her on doing so. For that very reason, I had to change and shift the comments that I was going to present, and I am just in the process of preparing those.

The other irony, of course, is that if anybody were to suggest that that report has been delayed and dug down for the reasons for that, of course it is that she could have presented her speech on December 16 when Senator Dallaire did. In fact, the Senate was good enough to give him the permission to do that ahead of the mover, but in fact she did not do it at that time. She did not do it until six weeks later. If there has been a delay, it certainly was a six-week delay at least incurred because of her inattention to speaking to it immediately.

Finally, I will say just as a matter of respect for the rules, the mores and the traditions of this Senate, asking to have a motion, a bill or an inquiry stand while a member has adjourned in his or her name is absolutely, fundamentally within our rights and has nothing to do with any kind of accusation that somebody is in fact delaying. I am not delaying; I am considering, and I will present when I am perfectly ready to do so.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, the Honourable Senator Mitchell raised a question as to a point of order. I think the explication given by the honourable senator has clarified the matter, and therefore I rule the matter as now settled.

[Senator Carignan]

Hon. Percy Mockler: Honourable senators, I have the honour today to speak in this chamber to the motion calling on the Government of Canada to modernize and standardize the laws that regulate Canada's maple syrup industry.

Allow me to begin, honourable senators, by congratulating Senator Nancy Greene Raine on her leadership in presenting the notice of motion on maple products. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge Yvon Poitras, the General Manager of the Maple Syrup Association, for his dedication and leadership with regard to maple syrup production in my home province of New Brunswick.

As we heard yesterday from Senator Runciman, Senator Ogilvie and others, there is no doubt in my mind that Canada is a model in maple syrup production in terms of quality and penetrating new markets.

I would like to share some information about New Brunswick in particular. With more than 200 maple syrup producers and over 2 million taps, we are the world's third-largest maple syrup producer. New Brunswick produces 1.8 million kilograms of maple syrup, and the value of maple products, including syrup, sugar and candy, exceeds \$12 million per year.

Furthermore, the world's largest maple syrup producer, with over 200,000 taps, is located in Saint-Quentin, which is in the Madawaska-Restigouche region of New Brunswick. This industry directly employs over 2,200 people in both year-round and seasonal jobs in the province.

Honourable senators, the question is: what should we do? We should support the marketing and sale of value-added maple syrup products. We should also boost Canadian production and sales, which represent 80 per cent of worldwide annual maple products output. We should also uphold and enhance quality and safety standards for maple products.

We should also be at the forefront of technological innovation to modernize and standardize the grading and classification system for pure maple syrup to be sold domestically and in import and export markets.

Honourable senators, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about Quebec. This province is the largest producer of maple products, with over 13,500 people producing maple syrup for 7,357 businesses with a quota in 2011. I am sure that other senators from Quebec will participate in this important and necessary debate that we cannot postpone. We must maintain high standards for maple syrup products and develop other world markets.

According to the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers, 43 million taps were operating in 2011. That year, Quebec produced 91 per cent of Canada's maple syrup. I would like to congratulate Quebec's producers on demonstrating leadership and encourage them to show the whole world that, with Quebec's leadership, people across Canada can produce quality products.

[English]

Honourable senators, this is an important motion that I believe is in the interests of the maple syrup industry, consumers of maple products and government regulators, both in Canada and in the United States.

I believe we should be partners with the producers and the industry in order to modernize and also to standardize the laws of the industry. To regulate Canada's maple syrup industry would simplify life for consumers, reduce duplication for government regulators and potentially open the door to new markets for the industry, both in North America and worldwide.

Honourable senators, let me begin by examining how the amendment of the Maple Products Regulations would benefit consumers and would also benefit our industry.

Many honourable senators may be surprised to learn that there is no single legal definition of what we can call pure maple syrup. As a result, it is up to the consumer to distinguish between maple syrup and other forms of natural and/or artificial sweeteners, which is no easy task. However, we must put in place standardization for a stable and a strong industry.

• (1440)

What would a uniform definition of pure maple syrup do? It would create a single reference point for consumers, producers, packers, retailers and regulators. In so doing, it would also allow consumers to compare maple syrup more easily to other sweeteners, enhancing consumer awareness of the purity of the best product in the world — maple syrup.

Compared to other common sweeteners, maple syrup has other major benefits, as supported by our health care system, but it is not only the definition of maple syrup that is in question; it is also how maple syrup is graded and classified.

The current system of grades is very confusing, to say the least. For example, Canada uses colours and numbers while our partner to the south, the United States of America, uses letters.

Honourable senators, not only do these systems fail to describe the taste of the best industry in the world, maple syrup, they can also be misleading.

The label of Grade B or Amber #2 for darker syrups, for example, can suggest an inferior quality in the minds of consumers worldwide.

The amendments would create a single grade for pure maple syrup in Canada. Whether it is light or dark, pure maple syrup would simply become known as "Grade A." Anything less than pure, which includes syrup with any number of defects, would and should be kept out of retail markets to protect the integrity of the maple syrup industry. These off-labelled syrups could be used, instead, by the food processing industry.

Honourable senators should all believe that a new system would put all colours of maple syrup on an equal footing in the marketplace, provided they meet taste and quality standards. This is all well and good, but even a single grade does not help consumers identify the taste of this product.

Do we have an indication of the flavour? Currently, there is no indication of product flavour. This is not so much a problem for consumers who are familiar with maple syrup. However, it is an obstacle for attracting new customers worldwide who may be uncertain about what they are buying and from where it comes.

Generally speaking, honourable senators, there is insufficient emphasis on assessing the taste of syrup within the current grade system in Canada and the U.S. As a result, there is a high risk that off-flavoured or otherwise inferior syrups can find their way into the retail market. That is not acceptable. Let us imagine someone buying maple syrup for the first time confronted with labels that suggest nothing about taste. They may still take a chance and buy a bottle or a can. If they have a bad experience, they may never try it again, and so they will never know that maple syrup has a variety of tastes and they may not discover one that they can enjoy.

Honourable senators, I would call this a most unfortunate turn of events for a want of descriptive labels. We are turning people away from a true Canadian delicacy, a true Canadian product, the best product in the world, and of course, the industry is losing out on potential return from customers and continuing to create real jobs in Canada.

Research has shown that when it comes to their maple syrup, consumers have definite preferences. Some consumers prefer mild varieties, others prefer medium and still others prefer strong.

Research has also shown that consumers like the idea of four distinct kinds of syrup based on colour and taste. In response to those findings, the proposed amendments would introduce four classes of Grade A maple syrup: "Golden Colour and Delicate Taste," "Amber Colour and Rich Taste," "Dark Colour and Robust Taste," and "Very Dark Colour and Strong Taste."

I have outlined the benefits of these proposed changes to the consumers, but let us look at what the industry will gain. Currently, for example, table syrups on grocery shelves often indicate that they contain some pure maple syrup. This can entice consumers, even though the actual amount of pure syrup in these products may be quite small, and there is no doubt consumers are reaching for table syrups more often because the pure product represents less than 1 per cent of the market share of common sweetener sales in all of North America.

For these reasons, I believe that a uniform definition, standard grading and nomenclature would be very advantageous to the maple syrup industry. It would allow 100 per cent pure maple syrup to stand out from other sweeteners. In so doing, it could boost market share for producers and also strengthen this vibrant industry to penetrate other markets.

Similarly, standardization could open doors to markets outside North America. Uniform grades and labels would simplify communication with potential trading partners, and it would set the stage for a possible application to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for an international food standard, which would give further assurance of the quality and safety of the best in the market, Canadian syrup.

Government, too, stands to benefit from the proposed changes and would play an important role in regulation. It is not enough for the industry to adopt these proposed changes on its own. By the industry's own admission, a purely voluntary and self-regulated approach would lead to inconsistent application at both producer and packer levels, as well as at provincial and state levels in the U.S. and in Canada. While the International Maple Syrup Institute has done important work — may I have five more minutes?

[Translation]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is leave granted for an extra five minutes?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Mockler: Honourable senators, thank you for your cooperation.

[English]

It is not enough for an industry to adopt the proposed changes on its own. That is why it is so important for the government to give changes the force of law by amending the Maple Products Regulations. Consider that in some jurisdictions the grading of maple syrup is entirely voluntary. However, it is not uncommon to see pure maple syrup sold without any indication of grade or colour class. This even occurs in jurisdictions that have regulations.

• (1450)

Regulators would have several important key roles. What will happen with sound, proper regulation and enforcement? First, they would help ensure that off-flavoured or otherwise defective syrups are not offered for sale in the retail marketplace. This is vital because when defective syrups find their way to retail markets, they damage our reputation.

Second, regulators would ensure that all maple syrup available in retail markets is batch-coded. Batch-coding enables producers to easily recall a product if there is a problem with quality and safety.

What is more, standard grades would make it easy for provinces with no current regulations to adopt the new system, and they would be strongly encouraged to do so. There is no doubt in my mind the successful visit to China by Prime Minister Harper will create another market opportunity for the best syrup in the world.

Honourable senators, there are clear benefits to amending the Maple Products Regulations for consumers, industry and government alike.

It has to be noted, in concluding, that Canada's maple syrup industry represents more than 80 per cent of sales worldwide. Even with this level of success, however, the industry could scale greater heights through a standardized mechanism. It is on the cusp of further market growth in North America as well as overseas. It is in everyone's interests that we support the industry's effort. We must stand together to help create a strong, stable maple syrup industry for Canada.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: I wonder if our colleague from the Republic of Madawaska would accept a question on such a sticky subject.

[Translation]

My question is twofold. First, I want to ask about production. Given the vacuum method used, do we currently have access to scientific data that show that this method of superproduction does not endanger our maple trees and, as a result, the maple syrup industry?

Second, at one time or another, we have all been in a restaurant that has offered imitation syrup rather than the real thing. During your study, did you make sure that all of Canada's federal institutions that purchase food products are actually purchasing Canadian maple syrup and not imitation syrup?

Senator Mockler: I am certain that Senator Dallaire's question is an important one. I am also certain that Senator Dallaire cannot prove to the Canadian public or consumers in Canada, the United States or other parts of the world that they are buying imitation syrup.

It is true that maple syrup is sticky, but it is so good. The reason why it is so sticky and good is because it is the best syrup in the world. It is maple syrup from Quebec, New Brunswick and other Canadian provinces. As soon as we have implemented a mechanism to standardize quality, we will be able to show the entire world, whether it be France, Africa, China, the United States or any part of Canada, that we offer a high-quality product and not a cheap imitation.

(On motion of Senator Hervieux-Payette, debate adjourned.)

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Frum, calling the attention of the Senate to egregious human rights abuses in Iran, particularly the use of torture and the cruel and inhuman treatment of unlawfully incarcerated political prisoners.

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak on the motion on the conditions of Iranian prisoners. I want to thank Senator Frum for initiating this motion. As she and you all are aware, I have raised these issues on the situation of prisoners in Iran on a number of occasions, and I had also commenced an inquiry in which Senator Segal and Senator Dallaire participated.

I rise today to join my colleagues in the Senate in denouncing the unjustifiable imprisonment of prisoners of conscience in Iran and their detention in unspeakable conditions.

It is common for prisoners of conscience in Iran to be placed in prolonged solitary confinement and subjected to deprivations, intimidation and torture in an attempt to extract false confessions from them.

From arrests without warrant to the courts' refusal to issue written judgment, the legal process makes a mockery of justice. Prisoners are held in crowded conditions, lacking adequate sanitation, daylight, clean water, exercise and fresh air, and also may be denied access to the necessary level of medical care.

Some have no beds and must sleep on concrete floors. Prisoners who complain about the conditions are beaten. Routinely, prisoners are separated from their parents, spouses and/or children by a glass partition during their infrequent and very short family visits. Some are transferred to the general ward where they must live alongside the most hardened and violent criminals.

In the words of Abdolkarim Lahiji, the Paris-based vice-president of the International Federation for Human Rights, the condition in Iranian prisons are "catastrophic."

These conditions are intolerable for any human being, but are particularly so for women, whose additional needs are not met and whose children are deprived of their care.

Some of the prisoners of conscience unjustly detained in Iranian prisons are women who launched the One Million Signatures Campaign for Equality that inspired ordinary Iranians to call for the repeal of laws discriminating against women.

Others are women who hope to contribute to the development of their country by promoting respect for human rights. Still others are political activists who were working peacefully to bring about change in the way their country is governed. All are unjustly denied rights enshrined in international human rights instruments to which Iran is a signatory.

For over 25 years I had represented many Iranians who had fled Iran. Today, I want to voice their pain and suffering as well. They lost their property; they lost their loved ones; they forever lost their peace of mind from the terrible torture they suffered in Iran. There were many days after representing Iranian asylum seekers I would dream of the situation at Evin Prison — Evin Prison being the most despicable prison on earth. Some Iranians have survived from Evin Prison. They have because of their sheer inner strength, as the Iranian government tried very hard to break them.

Honourable senators, I stand before you to state that there is no fear worse in this world than the knock of authorities who come to take your loved ones — loved ones who want to change conditions of their citizens.

My mother worked in the prisons in 1970 in Uganda and was one of the first people to speak of Idi Amin's tortures in jails. She would describe how when the prison guards ran out of bullets, they bludgeoned people to death. She would describe the unbearable pain and screams of Ugandans wrongly detained. At her funeral, many people told us how many lives she saved.

Many of my father's friends have also disappeared in Uganda. Then the knock came at my father's home. Luckily, my father had just escaped, but we did not know that, and the pain of not knowing for days where my father was was unbearable. We did not know where he was for many days. It did not end there. There was yet another knock at our house. The authorities brutally took my husband, Nuralla. The fear in his eyes, the fear in my father-in-law's eyes, the fear in my mother-in-law's eyes, and the fear in the eyes of my husband's siblings still haunts me. Happily for me, my husband did survive this brutal experience. Every story that each one of you have related brought back flashbacks to me of what happened to people, what happened to us.

• (1500)

Sadly, every day many people are taken prisoner all around the world. To name a few, the women in Zimbabwe, the priests in Tibet, the children in Syria — and the list goes on.

Our Canadian government has always played and continues to play a very important part all around the world. Exactly 40 years ago, Asian Ugandans were rescued, and at another time I will speak of the brave Canadians who saved us.

Today, I also want to remember a Canadian, Zahra Kazemi, who also lost her life at the hands of Iranian authorities. As a member of the Canadian Senate, I condemn the deplorable abuse of human rights by the Iranian regime and call upon the Government of Canada — the only government that I can call upon — to work hard to ensure the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience, not only in Iran, but also around the world. As I stated earlier in my statement today, I would like to repeat the words of His Highness the Aga Khan, an honorary Canadian, as his words will describe better than whatever I say. When he was conferred a doctorate by the University of Ottawa recently, His Highness said something incredibly profound. He stated:

In my experience, a country's standing in our contemporary world is no longer recognized by what it can achieve for itself, but by what it can do for others. In this context, Canada has truly become a great world power.

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, I would also like to speak to this inquiry and bring my perspective to the situation in Iran.

I would like to take a few moments to recognize those who have given a voice to the ongoing human rights situation in Iran, and particularly in this chamber. To put it succinctly, the growing list of men and women who have been subjected to harassment, imprisonment and torture is startling. Last week in the chamber we had the opportunity to hear many detailed accounts of these human rights abuses.

Four stories in particular stood out. First, we heard from Senator Ataullahjan who spoke of the Iranian social worker who was fired from his job and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Then we heard from Senator Finley, who shared a story of a long-time human rights lawyer and activist arrested not once but four times for defending his fellow countrymen from unjust arrests. We heard from Senator Mockler, who recalled the ordeal of former

teacher and school principal now sentenced to 20 years in prison. Finally, we heard from Senator MacDonald, who drew our attention to an internationally recognized prisoner of conscience sentenced to 10 years in jail.

Senators, these individuals know all too well what it is like to live under the heavy boot of tyranny. What these individuals also have in common is that they are all members, or have defended members, of the Baha'i faith. We here are not unfamiliar with the oppression of the Baha'i in Iran. We know, thanks in part to the inquiry of Senator Jaffer last year, that its members have historically suffered discrimination, including the denial of employment, the denial of higher education, and a long-standing media campaign of vilification, an item I will expand upon later. The Baha'is have been and continue to be subjected to brutal raids, arbitrary arrests and torture. Most alarming is the exponential level of incarceration rates among this group.

Iran has a particularly troubled record when it comes to protecting the rights of minorities. That the regime not only tolerates but also actively supports this behaviour is truly unconscionable.

Just under a year ago, the UN Human Rights Council agreed to appoint a special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran. Four months ago, the office released a damning report on the issues facing this community. In the report, it was noted that the majority of incarcerated Baha'is have "undergone judicial proceedings that lack due process and fair trial standards."

It goes on to note that approximately 100 members of the Baha'i community are currently behind bars, and more than 200 have been executed over the past 30 years. I shall do my best not to repeat all of what has been already said, except insofar as to tell you that there is a term for this systematic behaviour. It is called ideological genocide, with the intent to destroy the community as a religious entity. Allow me to explain.

[Translation]

I have here a report entitled *Inciting Hatred*, which was published in October 2011. The report details Iran's increasingly fierce propaganda war against Baha'is. For example, the report reveals that over the previous 16 months, Iran issued more than 400 press and media items demonizing Baha'is, accusing them of attempting to overthrow Islam and of being Zionist conspirators and Satanists.

Many of the articles include images of the Grim Reaper and other images intended to create a climate of fear, distrust and hatred toward the Baha'i faith.

The message is clear. The intentions and actions of Baha'is show that they are enemies of the Iranian state. Together with demonizing images, this propaganda fuels intolerance in the most fundamentalist segments of Iranian society. Extremism exists.

As many of you know, according to the U.S. Secretary of Defense, an Israeli attack on Iran could be an option. The Israeli Minister of Defense went one step further, saying:

If it isn't stopped within months, redundant facilities in the Iranian nuclear program will render an attack ineffectual.

This intensifies pressure for a strike.

After hundreds of articles accusing Baha'is of being Zionist spies, imagine what would happen to them if this went ahead. If Israel were to attack Iran tomorrow, 300,000 civilians would be in danger of extermination. I know from experience that these kinds of stories never end well. On the contrary, they end in a massive humanitarian catastrophe.

• (1510)

This is the same strategy that has been used many times by repressive societies determined to eliminate an enemy population, a population that they consider subversive. History has shown that the incessant and systematic repetition of lies and the creation of myths can instil hatred in the majority and that this hatred can translate into violence against a visible minority. Rwanda is just one example where this concept was put into practice; Darfur is another, where this is still happening.

As Friedrich Affolter has pointed out, the Iranian regime is prepared to partially or completely destroy the Baha'i community as a unique religious group. That is the very definition of ideological genocide. This is particularly true when a society finds itself in a tumultuous, volatile situation, as is the case in Iran right now.

Like an outcast, Iran does not trust its neighbours, near or far. Constantly at war against Israel, its accusations of Zionist conspiracies constitute a mortal sin against the Baha'i people. As a repressive state, Iran must deal with particularly sharp internal divisions in the context of the revolutions that have taken place in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria.

Uncertainty reigns. Iran is ranked 35th on the 2011 Failed States Index, which means that it is at risk of becoming a failed state. In these circumstances, the Baha'i community could be used as a scapegoat by state agencies and fundamentalist groups for the problems the Iranian government has perpetuated. This was the subject of some of the articles that appeared in the report entitled *Inciting Hatred*, which I mentioned earlier. According to these articles, if the Iranian government is threatened by secular forces wanting to subvert Islam, by Zionists or by Western forces, the Baha'is of Iran are to blame. Everything has been organized to target that community. The implicit message is this: in order to save the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Baha'i community must be eliminated.

As Canadians, we must stand up and defend the basic human rights of the Baha'i people, with whom we have had a positive relationship for quite some time.

As the honourable senator pointed out, all Canadian governments, going back decades, have asserted that principle through multilateral, bilateral and even regional initiatives. We therefore must pursue that path. We simply cannot leave the Iranian regime to its own devices, especially at such a crucial time, because if we do, that would put the lives of some 300,000 Baha'is in Iran at risk.

[English]

Honourable senators, as a member of the Senate of Canada, I, too, join my colleagues to condemn these human rights abuses, but as Canadians we must do more than condemn; we must take the leadership role that so many places in the world expect of this leading middle power. We can do this by offering remedies.

First, we must ensure not to close our doors to the Baha'is and other Iranian Human Rights Activists who seek refugee status in Canada. I cannot stress this point enough, and I call upon the government to demonstrate that will to these oppressed people.

Over the past 50 years, we have established a reputation for openness to those facing persecution worldwide. In the 1970s we opened our doors to the Vietnamese, the Cambodians and the Laotians. In the 1980s and 1990s, we opened our doors to Sri Lankans, and we continue to practise this today. We should offer nothing less to the Baha'is of Iran in an overt fashion and not simply hope that they ask the question.

Second, as we have heard from Senators Jaffer and Segal, we must take advantage of the Office for Religious Freedom, a creation of this government, ensuring the case of the Baha'is is at the top of the agenda when it comes to fruition and takes that cause by the government to the Iranians.

Finally, we must ensure our overall foreign affairs approach in dealing with Iran remains comprehensive. I have made this argument in the past but it bears repeating. While the nations of the world focus on the nuclear ambitions of Tehran — and as a member of the Pugwash movement, there is nothing that I feel more strongly against than the continued explosion, if I may use that term, of the use and possible use of nuclear weapons, an absolutely totally useless weapon system that is an affront to our human right to security.

We must not overlook, however, the ongoing human rights abuses in this country and the impact it can have on a very specific group of that nation. On this note, I wish to thank Senator Frum for pursuing this inquiry. Honourable senators, as former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations Paul Heinbecker has said, the question is not whether Iranian policies should be opposed but what is the most effective way to oppose them. Let us get into the debate. Let us get into the field. Let us get our hands dirty and attempt to move the yardsticks diplomatically and certainly continue the economic blockade that I hope will increase.

In dealing with world powers, we have had a great deal of success when it comes to employing sanctions, diplomacy and deterrence. Canada has been a leader in that moral position. We should continue to use these tools at every opportunity, lest the human rights situation deteriorate for the Baha'is and we face an ideological genocide that will ultimately destroy the lives of potentially up to 300,000 innocent human beings.

I close by sharing a few words by an Iranian poet Sheema Kalbasi, who said:

It is absurd to close your eyes and pretend that the Baha'is have never been slaughtered or forced to convert to Islam, as if the execution of political prisoners or the Kurds were just part of a game, an unwritten law in a lawless land.

Honourable senators, let us pledge to keep our eyes wide open and trained on Tehran during this difficult time so that we may stand with the Baha'i community and all those who are denied the right to liberty, life and security; to those who are oppressed; to those who are destroyed for their belief. Let us use all diplomatic, political and economic means available to steer Iran towards greater respect for human rights so that we may finally bring this ideological genocide to an end and ultimately solve the terrible problem of nuclear proliferation in that region.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, I rise today to condemn the Iranian regime's appalling abuse of human rights and particularly to call for the immediate release of Hamid Ghassemi-Shall. This is a case that I personally became involved with over a year ago in making representations and inquiring of our consular officials as to what the Canadian government could do to help this particular man.

Hamid Ghassemi-Shall is 42-year-old Toronto businessman who escaped to Canada from Iran after the 1979 revolution which brought the clerical regime to power. He made several trips back to Iran to visit family members over the subsequent 29 years without any trouble. However, in 2008, he was arrested by Iranian authorities while visiting his ailing mother. He was reportedly charged with espionage-related offences, which he flatly denied. There is speculation that his arrest was part of a reprisal against his brother. His brother was a former naval officer who was a sympathizer of the opposition movement in Iran and who was subsequently arrested and died after interrogation, illness and 20 months in prison, undoubtedly under torturous conditions.

• (1520)

The Iranian court system is weighted against people accused of crimes. According to a recent Amnesty International report, political suspects receive grossly unfair trials in which they often face vaguely worded charges. They are frequently convicted without a defence lawyer on the basis of confessions or other information allegedly obtained under torture. Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, those found guilty of these charges are often killed in mass executions designed to create fear among suspected enemies of the regime.

Iran refuses to recognize dual citizenship and has repeatedly denied Hamid access to Canadian consular officials. He has spent much of his imprisonment in solitary confinement at the notorious Evan Prison in Tehran, and there is grave concern that he has been subject to torture and ill treatment, which Amnesty International has documented to be very widespread in that prison.

In November 2009, Iranian authorities announced that he would be put to death. Honourable senators, Hamid's situation is made even more urgent by the escalating number of people being executed in Iran, which has been estimated at around 600 in the past year. As a member of the Senate of Canada and a Canadian citizen, I condemn the Iranian regime's systemic abuse of human rights, and I urge them to immediately release our fellow Canadian, Hamid Ghassemi-Shall.

[Translation]

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, I would like to begin my speech by congratulating Senator Frum on her good work on a very important issue. I would also like to acknowledge

the work of my two colleagues, who spoke before me this afternoon, because they are both leaders in this chamber when it comes to these important issues.

[English]

I rise to draw the attention of honourable senators to the case of Zeynab Jalalian of Iran, a young Kurdish civil rights activist who was arrested in Kermanshah in 2007 and incarcerated in Sanandaj Prison.

In 2009, the Iranian judiciary sentenced Ms. Jalalian to death without the presence of her lawyer, in a trial that lasted but a few minutes. Her only crime is peacefully defending civil rights. She has endured months in solitary confinement and has been subjected to severe physical and psychological torture. Fortunately, in 2011, her execution sentence was changed to life in prison. She has been suffering immensely for the last five years as a result of the physical and psychological torture she has endured.

As a member of the Senate of Canada, I condemn the Iranian regime's deplorable abuse of human rights and call for the immediate release of the unlawfully held prisoner, Zeynab Jalalian.

(On motion of Senator Chaput, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

THE SENATE

MOTION TO ESTABLISH NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY ADOPTED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Dawson, seconded by the Honourable Senator Day:

That the Senate agree that suicide is more than a personal tragedy, but is also a serious public health issue and public policy priority; and, further, that the Senate urge the government to work cooperatively with the provinces, territories, representative organizations from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people, and other stakeholders to establish and fund a National Suicide Prevention Strategy, which among other measures would promote a comprehensive and evidence-driven approach to deal with this terrible loss of life.

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, last week was Quebec's Suicide Prevention Week, under the auspices of the Association québécoise pour la prévention du suicide, Quebec's suicide prevention association. As a Quebecer and a Canadian, I am particularly aware of this issue.

From the outset, we have to recognize that death is not an easy subject to address or face, whether it is our own death or that of our family members and loved ones. It is nonetheless unavoidable, as we all know.

[Senator Dallaire]

However, when death can be avoided, we must do everything we can to prevent it. Suicide is one cause of early death that we should have real power to act on and prevent.

Senator Dawson's motion states that suicide is more than a personal tragedy, that it is also a serious public health issue. I would say that in addition to being a personal tragedy, suicide is also a family, community and societal tragedy.

[English]

In 2008, 3,705 Canadians took their own lives. Quebecers represented one third of this number, even though the province of Quebec makes up only 23 per cent of Canada's population. This, among other things, explains why I am so concerned about this issue.

[Translation]

We are talking here about people who actually committed suicide, who killed themselves. It is also important to take into account people who have attempted suicide but did not succeed, people who are having suicidal thoughts, and the friends, loved ones and acquaintances of these people. Too often, we address the issue of suicide from a statistical perspective; however, I think we can all agree that statistics do not show the human tragedy behind each suicide. Statistics do not show the suffering experienced prior to suicide attempts, whether they were successful or not. Statistics do not show the feelings of powerlessness experienced by the people who care about an individual who is having suicidal thoughts, and statistics do not show the severe turmoil experienced by the loved ones of someone who has committed suicide. It is an extremely violent internal tsunami.

Honourable senators, when we talk about suicide, we have to really look at the issue and the ripple effect it has. In order to convince you, I would like to share a personal example. A good friend of mine who worked in the field of suicide prevention roomed with a young man who was 24 years old. The young man was tall and good-looking. He had a good job and a large circle of friends. He did not seem to have any particular problems. In the summer of 1998, while my friend was on vacation outside the city for a week, he received a call informing him that his roommate had hung himself in their home. I repeat: my friend, the young man's roommate, worked in the field of suicide prevention. Can you imagine, honourable senators, the shock, the distress, the incomprehension, the anger and the guilt that my friend must have felt?

Can you also imagine the shock wave that this must have created not only in the young man's social circle, but also in that of his friend?

Despite the fact that I did not know the young man who committed suicide, I was shaken by this tragedy because his roommate was a close friend of mine. I was troubled by my friend's great distress and by the death of such a young man who seemed to have his whole life ahead of him. I was also touched by the sadness of the children and I was worried that such a tragedy could one day happen to someone in my family.

When a person commits suicide, it has far-reaching effects. It is like when a giant rock falls in the water and creates waves that spread in all directions. The suicide of this young man easily affected about 200 people.

For every person who commits suicide, approximately 10 people are left bereaved and many more are left shaken and upset.

• (1530)

[English]

Another tragic situation, which I witnessed, was the result of the suicide pact of two 14-year-old teenagers from St. Eustache in the 1990s. Without going into too many details, our entire community was affected, especially the students and staff of the school attended by the two young people. Post-traumatic sessions were held to allow the people affected by the tragedy to talk about their distress, their sadness and about how such an event could happen.

[Translation]

Yes, suicide is a personal tragedy, but as I mentioned in my introduction, it is also a family, community and societal tragedy. We must consider this a priority issue and deal with it aggressively. We have to take action on several fronts because suicide is a phenomenon involving a host of factors.

It is impossible to isolate a single factor that leads to suicide. In the vast majority of cases, various factors combine and interact, pushing people to end their lives. Every case is different. Nevertheless, there is a common denominator in every case: suffering. Those who attempt suicide are not, first and foremost, seeking death. Nobody knows what death is. People who attempt suicide want, above all, to end intolerable suffering. These people can see no other solution. They tend to isolate themselves rather than look for help and communicate their distress. In general, people who commit suicide are seeking a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

[English]

For us to make a real difference, we must act on several fronts. These include providing scientific research and promoting well-being in order to automatically prevent these tragedies. Higher-risk groups, in particular, include men, who represented 80 per cent of all suicides; aging Canadians; and specific groups, like Native communities, where suicide rates are four times higher than the Canadian average.

[Translation]

Naturally, we also need to focus on prevention measures to help people contemplating suicide. Furthermore, as a national suicide prevention strategy is developed, it will be crucial to work in partnership with all stakeholders, particularly the provinces, since they are responsible for health care and social services.

Our government has already begun working diligently on this important issue. The Government of Canada contributes to various activities related to suicide prevention, developing knowledge in the area of best practices, delivering programs to strengthen protective factors linked to positive mental health and reduce the risk of suicide, and monitoring mental health and mental illness within the population.

We also invested \$130 million to establish and support the Mental Health Commission of Canada, which is working to develop a national mental health strategy that will be completed

in 2012. The strategy will likely set out guidelines and priorities for suicide prevention, and as a result, it will play an instrumental role in guiding future measures in that area.

What is more, the government is investing \$140 million in implementing a national Aboriginal youth suicide prevention strategy that aims to strengthen protective factors and reduce risk factors in First Nations and Inuit communities.

Some \$20 million has been invested in suicide-related research on mental health and addiction through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. All of these actions have to be viewed as the essential beginning of a much broader action plan, like the one that was created in Quebec in 1998.

In closing, in no way and at no time can or should a person's suicide be acceptable or accepted. Suicide must not be an option. Suicide is not an option.

I move that we immediately adopt the motion.

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

(Motion agreed to.)

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AND CHRONIC CEREBROSPINAL VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Cordy, calling the attention of the Senate to those Canadians living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI), who lack access to the "liberation" procedure.

Hon. Jane Cordy: Honourable senators, I have my speech ready for today. However, a briefing was given to members of the House of Commons by Health Canada on this issue. Perhaps the same briefing will be offered to honourable senators before I proceed with my speech. Therefore, I adjourn the debate in my name for the remainder of my time.

(On motion of Senator Cordy, debate adjourned.)

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTING OF THE SENATE

Hon. John D. Wallace, pursuant to notice of February 14, 2012, moved:

That on Thursday, February 16, 2012, the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs have the power to sit even though the Senate may then be sitting, for the purpose of its consideration of Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend

the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, with the application of rule 95(4) being suspended in relation thereto.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO REFER DOCUMENTS
FROM STUDIES ON BILL C-15 DURING SECOND
SESSION OF FORTIETH PARLIAMENT, BILL S-7
AND S-10 DURING THIRD SESSION OF FORTIETH
PARLIAMENT AND BILL S-225 DURING
SECOND SESSION OF THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT
TO CURRENT STUDY ON BILL C-10

Hon. John D. Wallace, pursuant to notice of February 14, 2012, moved:

That the papers and evidence received and taken and work accomplished by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs during its study of Bill C-15, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament, and Bill S-10, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament; and that the papers and evidence received and taken by the Special Senate Committee on Anti-Terrorism, during its study of Bill S-7, An Act to deter terrorism and to amend the State Immunity Act during the Third Session of the Fortieth Parliament and by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, during its study of Bill S-225, An Act to amend the State Immunity Act and the Criminal Code (deterring terrorism by providing a civil right of action against perpetrators and sponsors of terrorism), during the Second Session of the Thirty-Ninth Parliament, be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs for the purposes of its study on Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, during the current session.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, February 16, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, February 16, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Thursday, February 16, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF PRIVATE KENNETH BRYANT JONES

Hon. Yonah Martin: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize the month in which we celebrate Canadian Black history. In particular, I wish to call attention to the sixtieth anniversary of the death of one of our Canadian soldiers who was killed in action during the Korean War.

[Translation]

Private Kenneth Bryant Jones died in combat in Korea on January 8, 1952. While serving with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, he was shot and died instantly.

[English]

This proud Black soldier from Windsor, Ontario, had also served our country on active service for three years during the Second World War. He first enlisted in the Canadian Army in September 1942, at age 20. He served in campaigns in Italy, France and Germany. At the outbreak of the Korean War, he re-enlisted to serve in the Canadian Army Special Force. Having already sacrificed so much for Canada during World War II, when he fell in Korea, he was only 30 years old.

[Translation]

This proud Canadian's story is one not only of sadness, but also of courage, inspiration and family love.

In 1920, when he was just two years old, he and his brothers and sisters were orphaned. He grew up in an extended, loving family, raised by his uncle and aunt, George and Evelyn Jones, of Windsor. He was very close to his nieces and nephews, especially one very young nephew, Ronald Jones. Today, Ronald Jones is a long-serving City of Windsor councillor. Every year, Councillor Jones lays flowers at the Korean War memorial and the Windsor war memorial in memory of his kind uncle.

[English]

Yet, Kenneth Jones is but one of our wonderful Canadians of colour who fell in the Korean War, as well as in other wars and theatres of operations. It is an accolade to our Canadian traditions and heritage that in our Canadian Forces all who served were treated equally, with no distinction made based on one's racial, religious or cultural uniqueness. Moreover, all

Canadian soldiers, of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, gave their all, wholeheartedly, to our wonderful country. They will all attest to how proud they were to wear the Canadian uniform and to serve under our nation's flag.

[Translation]

Although 60 years have passed since his death, every generation of his family knows the story of this exemplary Canadian soldier. They revere him as an ancestor deserving of their pride. They all know that this great soldier served Canada in two wars and that he gave his life for us and for the people of the Republic of Korea. His actions have been woven into Canada's flag and have written a chapter in Canada's history.

We will remember them.

COPTIC CHRISTIANS IN EGYPT

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, I would like to talk about the alarming events affecting our Christian brothers in Egypt. I am referring to the Copts who have been in Egypt since the dawn of time, at least since the birth of Christianity.

According to the information I have received from friends living in Canada and around the world, since the Arab Spring, Salafists have continuously tortured Copts, sometimes to the point of death. The number of cases is staggering. Although Christians have always experienced persecution in that part of the world, never has it been as horrific as in the past year or so.

One of the first incidents I heard about had to do with a Salafist who cut off a Christian's ear because the Christian had supposedly rented an apartment to a morally corrupt woman. The incident ended with what is called a "reconciliation meeting" that takes place under the auspices of state security, in front of members of the majority community, during which the victim was forced to forgive his aggressor. No trial, no justice. With this kind of community justice system, the aggressor — supported by the majority — becomes the judge, imposes conditions and pronounces the verdict.

This first incident served as an example and we could list dozens more of the same nature, with the same outcome, all over Upper Egypt, in Cairo and now in Alexandria.

Thus, the Assyrian International News Agency reported recently that a series of so-called mediation meetings had been organized by radical Muslims to decide the fate of some Coptic Christians in a village near Alexandria. It was decided that the entire Coptic population — 62 families in that small village — be expelled because of one unfounded accusation against one, individual Coptic Christian.

In the village of Kóbry-el-Sharbat in the El-Amerya region near Alexandria, the news agency also reported that Copts were attacked on January 27 by a crowd of some 3,000 Muslims, led by

Salafist leaders, who pillaged and set fire to the houses and shops owned by Copts. The violence was sparked by allegations that a Coptic man had photos of a Muslim woman on his cell phone. That man is now in prison and of course the photos were never found.

Are we about to witness an ethnic cleansing on religious grounds?

• (1340)

Honourable senators, we who enjoy watching democracy appear in that country, via Facebook and other social media, know what will happen if nothing is done to prevent this.

We in the West can no longer close our eyes to such inhumane behaviour. I urge everyone here and every Canadian to join your voices to mine to call on the Government of Canada to intervene to put an end to these persecutions so that Egypt, a country we admire for its culture, can be a country with real legal rights and a free and independent justice system that serves all its citizens, and so that the hope for democracy can finally see the light of day with the support and protection of a new Egyptian government whose elected members will be called upon to draft a constitution.

[English]

THE LATE BISHOP JOHN R. SPERRY, C.M. THE LATE DR. ROBERT G. WILLIAMSON, C.M.

Hon. Dennis Glen Patterson: Honourable senators, two dear friends of the North and the Inuit passed away this past weekend. They were both in their eighties and both had a long history in the North. Retired Bishop John Sperry and Bob Williamson gave their lives to help Inuit in a multitude of ways. As Mary Simon, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, ITK, said in tribute to both men this past week:

They were both skilled in the Inuit language. Bishop Sperry mastered Inuinnaqtun, while Professor Williamson spoke Inuktitut. The bishop gave Inuit the Bible translated into our language, while Bob Williamson founded Inuktitut magazine, which ITK still publishes today.

Bishop Sperry served in the Royal Navy, on destroyers and escorts, in the Second World War and was Bishop of the Arctic from 1973 to 1990. He served in Coppermine, now Kugluktuk, where his many services to Inuit included pulling teeth. Bishop Sperry wrote *Igloo Dwellers Were My Church*, a memoir of his over 60 years in the North.

Professor Williamson taught at the University of Saskatchewan, where he helped create the Institute of Northern Studies and the Arctic Research and Training Centre. He also worked for the federal Department of Northern Affairs where he established their Eskimology section. He first lived in Pangnirtung, in 1953, and then in Rankin Inlet. Dr. Williamson, an anthropologist, teacher and advocate, vigorously represented the Keewatin region for two terms between 1966 and 1970 as an elected member of the Northwest Territories territorial council. He was fondly known to the Inuit as Quniguapik or Bobbyaluk, and a lake in Rankin Inlet bears his name.

Tributes have been pouring in for both men. Canon Mike Gardner said of Bishop Sperry:

He had an amazing knowledge of life in the North and was always available with his uplifting advice, humour and prayer. He truly loved and knew the people of the North.

Both men, whom I was privileged to know, were honoured with the Order of Canada.

As Mary Simon said:

Both men will be greatly missed, but their contributions will live on, and Inuit, who still live by an oral culture, will pass on stories about Jack and Bob for years to come.

THE LATE DR. GEOFFREY L. PAWSON, C.M.

Hon. Robert W. Peterson: Honourable senators, Saskatchewan has lost a great citizen with the untimely passing of Dr. Geoff Pawson last week. He was, as founder and CEO of Ranch Ehrlo, a pioneer in developing a care facility for troubled youth. He started with a vision and six youth in 1966. Today, Ranch Ehrlo enables 250 young people to achieve a higher potential in their lives. The ranch has been recognized as one of the top 10 employers for 2012.

Dr. Pawson was a trailblazer in developing new programs and procedures to streamline effective outputs. He was recognized internationally and was sought after as a guest speaker at seminars. He believed everyone should be given the chance to flourish. All they need are the tools and support.

Dr. Pawson leaves a legacy that will continue on because of his foresight in developing a superb governance structure and talented and dedicated staff. The motto of Ranch Ehrlo, "Go forward with pride," will resonate for years to come.

To his wife, Barbara, and the family, we offer our profound sympathies and love.

BOREAL WOODLAND CARIBOU

Hon. Janis G. Johnson: Honourable senators, I would like to speak to you today about the iconic national symbol, the boreal woodland caribou. It is in a troubling state. The boreal population of woodland caribou is listed as nationally threatened under the federal Species at Risk Act, and many local populations of this animal that graces our 25-cent coin are in steep decline from Yukon to Labrador. Most Canadians are likely unaware that caribou were once found as far south as Algonquin Park in Ontario. They ranged through Southern Alberta, B.C. and Idaho, and they lived in the Maritime provinces until the 1920s. Over the past 100 years, the woodland caribou have disappeared from almost half of their historic range.

The science is clear that habitat loss from human activity is the primary reason that our boreal woodland caribou are in such serious decline. As intact forests are fragmented by logging, mining roads, seismic lines and transmission corridors, the

caribou populations slowly disappear. These activities are continuing to expand northward, putting more and more of the caribou at risk.

This trend should be of great concern to all Canadians. While we want a safe future for this iconic symbol of our country, the decline also signals a bigger problem. Scientists tell us that the presence of caribou in our forests is an indicator of the health of the forest. If caribou are in trouble, it is a sign that the boreal forest is declining.

This situation matters far beyond our borders. The boreal forest is of global significance. It is the world's largest source of fresh water and the northern lungs of the planet. It is one of the largest intact forest ecosystems left on earth, and it contains the world's highest concentration of large wetlands, lakes and undammed rivers. Its peatlands and soils store the largest amount of soil carbon of any ecosystem on the planet, helping to stabilize the climate. It is the nesting ground for millions of songbirds and waterfowl. Ensuring the future health of Canada's boreal forest is important to the entire world community. Unlike most jurisdictions in the world, Canada still has the opportunity for the large-scale conservation required to maintain fully functioning ecosystems.

There is some good news because Environment Canada recently released a proposed recovery strategy for the boreal woodland caribou, as required under the Species at Risk Act. Until February 2012 — this month — the department is consulting Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians on their proposed strategy. I recently met with the representatives of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, a respected, national, non-profit conservation organization that has been working to protect caribou in the boreal forest for many years. They have reviewed the draft recovery strategy and are very pleased that it recognizes the strong scientific evidence that habitat loss is the main threat to the boreal woodland caribou. However, they are very concerned about certain problems in the strategy that could allow the caribou's critical habitat to continue to be destroyed. They note that the recovery strategy has only a 60 per cent chance of long-term success and that this is the benchmark that determines how much critical habitat should be protected.

Honourable senators, I firmly believe that we must err on the side of caution when setting recovery targets for caribou and that we need to give them a much better shot at long-term survival than the 60 per cent proposed in this recovery strategy. As Canadians, we are so fortunate to still have an opportunity to conserve one of the last great forests and to secure its future well-being for the benefit of all life, including that of humans. Working with our Aboriginal communities and our provincial, territorial and federal government, our conservation organizations and industry need to grasp this opportunity, starting by strengthening the recovery strategy for the boreal woodland caribou to ensure enough habitat is protected to sustain healthy populations of caribou, healthy forests, and healthy communities into the future.

Thank you.

DR. SHAHEEN SHARIFF

CONGRATULATIONS ON FACEBOOK'S DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP RESEARCH GRANT

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan: Honourable senators, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Shaheen Shariff and her team at McGill University for being named as one of the four recipients worldwide and the only Canadian recipient of Facebook's Digital Citizenship Research Grant, a \$50,000 award.

Out of nearly 100 grant applications from more than 10 countries, Dr. Shariff's Define the Line project, based on her pioneering research in media and technology, is designed to help reduce cyberbullying and promote responsible digital citizenship. The website www.definetheline.ca aims to help youth conceptualize the risks and responsibilities of using social media. It also helps parents, teachers and policymakers navigate a "balance between online free expression, safety, supervision and regulation." The Define the Line project truly embodies the spirit of socially responsible digital citizenship.

• (1350)

The Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights is similarly committed to studying cyberbullying as an issue of child protection. While we recognize that the social and educational opportunities that come with social media are momentous, as more children become active in social media at younger ages, the onus is on us to teach them the responsibility of digital citizenship.

I commend Facebook as a leader in social media for taking the responsibility upon itself in supporting world-class research to understand the challenges and opportunities our children are facing while growing up surrounded by media and technology.

I offer my sincere congratulations to Dr. Shariff and her team of education and law students at McGill University. I am proud that you are upholding our nation's vision of rights and responsibilities in the digital world.

[Translation]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

BUDGET—STUDY ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION EFFORTS IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR—FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Percy Mockler, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, presented the following report:

Thursday, February 16, 2012

The Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry has the honour to present its

FIFTH REPORT

Your committee, which was authorized by the Senate on Thursday, June 16, 2011 to examine and report on research and innovation efforts in the agricultural sector, respectfully requests supplementary funds for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012.

Pursuant to Chapter 3:06, section 2(1)(c) of the *Senate Administrative Rules*, the supplementary budget submitted to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration and the report thereon of that committee are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

PERCY MOCKLER
Chair

(For text of budget, see today's Journals of the Senate, Appendix A, p. 876.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

Senator Mockler: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(g), I move that the report be placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration later this day.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

[English]

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Could honourable senators have an explanation as to why?

[Translation]

Senator Mockler: Honourable senators, we are seeking authorization for the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry to redistribute funds previously approved by the Senate in its adoption of the committee's third report on November 2, 2011.

More specifically, honourable senators, in our initial budget request, the committee wanted to take a full week to go to the Maritimes and Quebec, but unfortunately, we could not find the time for that trip. That being said, I am not trying to make excuses, honourable senators, but the fact that the funds were not authorized until November and the fact that we could not travel while the Senate was in session limited our options. The cost of the trip can now be halved, saving approximately \$8,000 of the initial budget.

Senator Day: I think I understand.

[Senator Mockler]

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Is the report on the budget or on the policy studied by the committee? You did produce a report following work carried out in Ottawa. What is the nature of the report? Is it related solely to your budget? Why table it today ahead of the deadline?

Senator Mockler: It is about the budget. We will save \$8,000 by reorganizing two trips instead of one, and the senators will be able to go.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Some Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Mockler, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration later this day.)

[English]

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

SIXTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE TABLED

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, which deals with reports on international travel.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

BUDGET AND AUTHORIZATION TO ENGAGE SERVICE AND TRAVEL—STUDY ON MANAGEMENT OF GREY SEAL POPULATION OFF CANADA'S EAST COAST—FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. Fabian Manning, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, presented the following report:

Thursday, February 16, 2012

The Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans has the honour to present its

FIFTH REPORT

Your Committee, which was authorized by the Senate on Thursday, October 20, 2011 to examine and report on the management of the grey seal population off Canada's East Coast, respectfully requests funds for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012, and requests, for the purpose of such study, that it be empowered:

- (a) to engage the services of such counsel, technical, clerical and other personnel as may be necessary;
- (b) to adjourn from place to place within Canada; and
- (c) to travel inside Canada.

Pursuant to Chapter 3:06, section 2(1)(c) of the *Senate Administrative Rules*, the budget submitted to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration and the report thereon of that committee are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

FABIAN MANNING
Chair

(For text of budget, see today's Journals of the Senate, Appendix B, p. 884.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

(On motion of Senator Manning, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

CRIMINAL CODE FIREARMS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-19, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act.

(Bill read first time.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

(On motion of Senator Carignan, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

• (1400)

QUESTION PERIOD

ENVIRONMENT

OZONE LAYER MONITORING

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, my question today to the Leader of the Government in the Senate deals with monitoring of the ozone layer in the Northwest Territories by Environment Canada. Canada has long been a world leader when it comes to monitoring the ozone layer and measuring soot and pollution that come to the Arctic from around the world.

A recent publication in a newsletter of the American Geophysical Union stated that government cuts to monitoring stations in the North and data reporting will jeopardize this capability. Soot monitoring is particularly important given Canada's commitment at Cancun to deal with the impact of

this substance on Arctic warming. These cuts could affect Canada's contribution to four major international agreements, including the 1987 Montreal Protocol to reduce ozone depletion.

When he was in the North last summer, the Prime Minister indicated his sensitivity to the environment of the North when it was revealed to him that cuts were being made to reduce water monitoring north of 60, and I believe he reversed the department's decision in this matter. However, in this case, Environment Canada and the Minister of the Environment have been less than transparent when it comes to revealing which stations have been closed and which programs have been cut.

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell me which monitoring stations have been closed, why the website that distributes data on Arctic pollution measurements has been taken down, and how this will impact Canada's international obligations?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I will take as notice the portion of the honourable senator's question with regard to the precise sites. I assure the honourable senator that Environment Canada's ability to monitor ozone levels has not been negatively affected by any changes that have been made, and the department continues to provide world-class analysis on this issue. As I mentioned, with regard to the specifics, I will be happy to provide the honourable senator with a written response.

PUBLIC SAFETY

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM INTERNET PREDATORS

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Last year, the government told Canadians that the mandatory long-form census had to be abolished because it was a terrible invasion of Canadians' privacy. The gun registry, which simply told the police where guns could be found, had to be abolished because it was a terrible intrusion into Canadians' lives and suggested that they were all criminals.

However, now the government has turned around and wants to introduce Big Brother into Canadians' surfing of the Internet. Police, without even having to ask a court or a Justice of the Peace for a warrant, are to be allowed to snoop into Canadians' Internet accounts.

Help me here: How is it more acceptable to intrude into Canadians' use of the Internet without their knowledge than to ask them to fill out a census form or to register a long gun?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with respect to Bill C-19, the long-gun registry is being dismantled because it targeted law-abiding hunters and farmers. Clearly, when that law was brought in, it targeted innocent, law-abiding citizens. Bill C-30, which we are proposing, targets serious Internet predators, and our children suffer.

I will put on the record something that is known. All provincial attorneys general, including Liberals and NDP, unanimously supported moving forward with Bill C-30, the protecting children

from Internet Predators Act, as soon as possible. As technology has evolved — and we all know how technologies have evolved even in the past five years — many criminal activities have developed that have given Internet predators access to a serious criminal offence at the expense of our children.

However, as Minister Toews indicated in the other place, we will be sending this legislation directly to a committee for a full and wide-ranging examination. Hopefully, through the deliberations of that committee, the recommendations that will come back will provide, in the best way possible, the opportunity going forward to protect our children from Internet predators.

Senator Cowan: Protection of our children from Internet predators is something we would all like to see strengthened as far as possible, but there are privacy rights that Canadians have.

I want to quote several comments that have been made by Jennifer Stoddart, the Privacy Commissioner. She said that this amounts to “circumventing the courts to obtain personal information.” She sent a letter to Minister Toews in which she said: “Only prior court authorization provides the rigorous privacy protection that Canadians expect.”

She goes on to say:

... if the concern of law enforcement agencies is that it is difficult to obtain warrants or judicial authorization in a timely way, these administrative challenges should be addressed by administrative solutions rather than by weakening long-standing legal principles that uphold Canadians' fundamental freedoms.

We have the advice from an officer of Parliament, the Privacy Commissioner. The leader indicated that the minister would be open to strengthening the act and assuring a proper balance. Will that include allowing amendments or perhaps promoting amendments that will ensure that Canadians' fundamental right to privacy will be adequately protected, not at the expense of appropriate action to trap or to catch Internet predators but to get an appropriate balance between that very legitimate need to which the leader refers and the equally legitimate need to protect the privacy of Canadian citizens?

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I am quite certain the Privacy Commissioner, Jennifer Stoddart, will be called before the committee in the other place. That is what I said, what the minister said and what the Prime Minister said, that this bill will be sent directly to committee for a full and wide-ranging discussion. Hopefully, out of that review, everyone on all sides can put their heads together and come up with the best piece of legislation, legislation that will do as we intend it to do, and that is to protect our children.

I know there is a lot of hysteria in the media, some of it unfounded. What we are proposing is similar to what is done in the United States, Australia and Great Britain. They are far ahead of us in terms of protecting their children from Internet predators. That having been said, I have full confidence that when this

matter is sent to the committee in the other place, the views of the Privacy Commissioner and others will be taken into account. The end product will be something, as was intended by the government, to protect our children from this growing problem. We only have to listen to and read the news every day to know how serious this problem is, and it is growing. It is not diminishing.

• (1410)

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, the leader has said that it is very important that we protect our children from Internet predators. There is not a single person in this house, in the other house or across the country who does not want to protect our children from Internet predators.

My question is who will protect our children from Conservative privacy predators?

Senator LeBreton: That is truly brilliant, Senator Mitchell. As I think your leader indicated and as I indicated, surely it is in the interests of all of us to ensure that when we pass legislation in this regard — and I point out that this is similar to legislation that has been passed by most modern countries in the world and we are lagging way behind — we should take the matter seriously. The aim is to protect our children, not to make ridiculous statements like the honourable senator has just made.

[Translation]

LONG-GUN REGISTRY

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I am certain that she is very pleased that I still have a question to ask her, particularly since the economy is an issue that is extremely important to her. I am trying to make a connection between the firearms registry and economic growth and job creation.

We learned that, yesterday evening, a party was organized to celebrate a happy occasion. To me, a happy occasion is a birthday, a promotion, the birth of a child or a wedding, for example. The leader will understand why we have doubts about the nature of the happy occasion that was celebrated when she thinks about the incredible tragedies that have occurred in Canada, particularly in my province. Yesterday was not about victims' rights. The Conservatives simply use victims' rights as a pretext for introducing other bills.

In Quebec, the general impression was that the Conservatives' party was equivalent to dancing on the graves of Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Bárbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maude Haviernick, Barbara Klucznik Widajewicz, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault and Annie Turcotte — all those who died during the Polytechnique massacre.

How can the leader's government celebrate such a bill when it was born from the killings at École Polytechnique?

[Senator LeBreton]

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): We all vividly remember the tragedy at École Polytechnique, and I remember exactly what I was doing when that terrible tragedy happened. For the honourable senator to equate that in any way with legislation that targets law-abiding citizens is shameful.

I am at a loss for words. As a victim myself, as others of us, of criminal acts, how could she stand up in this place and use the names of innocent victims to criticize a piece of government legislation? The honourable senator knows full well, as we all do, that the tragic events at École Polytechnique, which saw so many young women massacred, has nothing whatsoever to do with Bill C-19, which was an act to abolish the long-gun registry.

It is disgusting that the honourable senator would even equate the two. She always tries to confuse the issue of the long-gun registry with our serious efforts to control dangerous weapons. As I have pointed out in this place many times, these were brought in by Conservative governments. We have strong gun control laws in this country.

Back when this long-gun registry was brought into this place in the mid-1990s, I said at the time that the money would be far better spent on border security to keep illegal guns out of the country and on issues such as violence against women.

[Translation]

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I am sorry to say that I do not know which of the two would be more shocked by the leader's words. Suzanne Laplante-Edward, who lost her daughter in this tragedy, stated, "I am outraged. I cannot believe that my taxes are being used to pay for a party where the Conservatives are dancing on my daughter's grave."

Those are not my words, but those of a victim's mother.

The leader is claiming that the registry is being abolished to save money, but evidence was brought before committee showing that the firearm-related homicide rate has fallen since the registry was implemented. From the beginning, there has been a reduction in the number of lives lost and the number of court cases, as well as in the costs that the government must assume when such an incident occurs.

Finally, could the leader provide us with the exact amount of money spent on the party in question?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: First of all, I have the greatest sympathy for the mothers of the victims. I can totally understand her feelings. Anyone who has lost children is very emotional about it.

I remove the mothers of the victims from this because, obviously, anybody who has lived through a tragedy like that has great difficulty with any matters that they perceive to be directly related to the tragedies they have faced.

The fact of the matter is that the government — and before we formed the government, in every election since 2004, our party then and now as we ran for government — has made it very clear that it was our intention to scrap the long-gun registry. As I have mentioned many times, I was raised on a farm. We had shotguns and rifles, and my father was certainly not a criminal.

The purpose of the bill was not to target law-abiding citizens. Of course the government, at the same time, adheres to strict gun control laws brought in by Conservative governments, as I have pointed out.

Certain members of Parliament have worked many years on this issue, some of them for 15 or 17 years. The fact that they decided to have an event to mark the occasion is their own business. As far as I know, these are events that they decided to participate in, which is their right. I do not know what that has to do with the taxpayer or the government.

[Translation]

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I gather from the leader's response that we will not be told the amount paid for this party.

For several months now, Quebec's public safety minister, Robert Dutil, has been urging the government to transfer the firearms registry, which was paid for by all Canadian taxpayers, in the event that Bill C-19 was passed. The government's idea of saving money is strange to say the least, given that it continues to ignore a request that would allow a province to continue to use the registry and benefit from the investment that has already been made.

How does the leader justify her government's decision and how can Prime Minister Harper say that he respects taxpayers when 70 per cent of Quebecers are in favour of keeping the registry?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: The bill is very clear, as was our commitment. We brought in Bill C-19 to scrap the long-gun registry. It is a registry. A registry has names. When we said we were going to scrap the long-gun registry, we are doing exactly what we said we would do.

• (1420)

We have the bill before us now, and if individual provinces want to embark on their own registries, they are free to do so. However, we will not participate in a back-door effort with data, by the way, which is now incomplete and not useful.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: How many other registries in other departments does the government intend to erase and to make disappear in order to imply their policy?

Senator LeBreton: That is in line with the honourable senator's usual ridiculous questions. We are talking about the long-gun registry, and the bill before us is to scrap it.

I must say, at this point, I was delighted to see two NDP members of the Official Opposition have the courage to get up and vote for this measure. For the honourable senator to ask me some question about how many registries, it actually is a ridiculous question and I should not even be trying to answer it.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I have every right to talk to the leader and to ask her questions. That is my role as a member of the opposition.

The leader also has the duty to answer politely. I have never qualified her as ridiculous, and I have never used words describing her as an idiot, so I do not see why she would talk to me this way. I ask her to withdraw those words.

Senator LeBreton: I do not think I have ever called anyone an idiot, unless I have done so to their face, which of course is in private.

When Senator Hervieux-Payette reads her preambles and the vicious attacks that she unleashes on our government every time she gets up, which is her right, I have a right to defend my government. I will do so, and I will absolutely not apologize for it.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Claude Rivest: Honourable senators, I would like to ask the minister for a clarification. She mentioned the fact that if provincial governments wanted to continue having a registry, they could do so. As you know, honourable senators, the Government of Quebec, particularly the Quebec Minister of Justice and Attorney General, publicly announced that, as soon as this bill passes and receives Royal Assent, the Government of Quebec will take the matter to court immediately to protect the existing data, to ensure that the Canadian government does not destroy those data.

Given that the data — even if they are not perfect — could be very useful to a government — for instance, to the Quebec government and perhaps other provincial governments across Canada — that wants to have and use such a registry, why do the government and the minister responsible want to destroy the data? The Government of Canada must realize that if it goes through with its plans, the Quebec justice minister and Quebec taxpayers will have no choice but to take the matter to court and spend more money to get an injunction.

It seems to me that, in the spirit of federalism and federal-provincial cooperation, there would be a way for two intelligent people, the federal Minister of Justice and Quebec's minister, to find and agree on a reasonable solution to this aspect of the gun control issue.

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I do not know the status of the Quebec government's intentions or whether this is before the courts. I do not comment on things before the courts.

I will say one thing: We have never, ever supported making law-abiding hunters, farmers, sports and target shooters a target. These are lawful citizens.

[Senator LeBreton]

We made a commitment to get rid of the long-gun registry after many years and many times in Parliament. It is finally before us here in the Senate. This is the federal long-gun registry, which we are eliminating with Bill C-19. Any province can do what it wishes, but this information, which is now incomplete, is part of the registry that we committed to abolishing. We are going to abolish it. If people want to set up their own registries, they will not do so through the back door on incomplete information we may have.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

PROCUREMENT POLICIES—HEALTH AND SAFETY

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. It relates to national defence procurement policies.

The Department of National Defence manages \$3.5 billion annually in capital expenditures and annually spends \$2.6 billion for maintenance and upgrades. They also oversee \$22 billion of existing inventory on major systems and assets. Therefore, there is a huge amount of money being spent by National Defence in relation to materiel.

Former Auditor General Sheila Fraser looked into the practices at DND and stated not long ago that the current system, if followed, can provide the openness, fairness and accountability that is essential to ensure National Defence gets the equipment it needs and that it achieves best value.

Honourable senators will be aware, and the government I am sure is aware, that recently the Union of National Defence Employees gave the Defence Committee in the other place a report that suggests the Canadian taxpayer is paying above and beyond what they should for the allegedly shoddy work at the Defence Department buildings. The work is being done by private contractors who are hired through defence construction. The report included invoices and photographs that show crumbling foundations in new buildings.

I have waited a few days to ask this question to determine what steps the government will be taking. The first line of oversight is obviously within the department, and then parliamentarians, once we know what the department is doing, can perform the necessary oversight that we deem advisable.

What steps at this stage is the government taking since receiving this report to ensure that Canadians are getting the best value for their tax dollars?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I did see that union report in the newspaper. Of course, we always appreciated the good advice that we received from former Auditor General Sheila Fraser.

We are fully committed to getting the best equipment for Canadian Forces at the best price for Canadians, with the best benefits for Canadian companies and workers. The Canada First Defence Strategy sets out a well-established funding framework that the honourable senator is familiar with, with a vision for the forces.

Since 2006, our government has reduced the average time required for military procurement from 7 years to 48 months, a very big improvement in procurement, or three full years faster than was the case under the previous government.

With regard to the specific comments of the union, I can assure the honourable senator that the government and the minister are fully committed to always seeking the best equipment, the best work, at the best price for Canadian taxpayers.

Senator Day: The Auditor General, in conducting that particular study, pointed out very clearly that the Department of National Defence or indeed any government department's responsibility of oversight is not over when it has decided to contract the work out rather than having the work done from within the department.

My understanding is that a lot of this work is to deal with existing assets and maintenance of over \$22 billion worth of assets that DND manages.

Could the minister assure us that in looking into this matter we will be informed in an appropriate time, hopefully soon, whether this contracting out is resulting in health and safety considerations and concerns for our citizens?

• (1430)

Senator LeBreton: I thank the honourable senator. It should be pointed out that the report from the unions that he referred to has not been received by the Minister of Public Works.

The Minister of Public Works, who is involved in a procurement of this nature, did indicate that when she receives this report from the union she will turn it over to the Auditor General.

Senator Day: From the reports that I have seen, the report was given to the Defence Committee in the other place, presumably chaired by a Conservative parliamentarian. Could we expedite this by having the minister check with her colleague and get a copy of the report in that way?

Senator LeBreton: I will certainly make that suggestion to her.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

HERITAGE LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION

Hon. Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Last spring, the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans tabled its report on the implementation of the Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act. In this report, the committee made several recommendations to the government about how best to go about preserving our heritage lighthouses as important cultural, historic and economically valuable assets in partnership with local community groups.

From evidence the committee heard, in order for these community organizations to take over responsibility for the maintenance of these lighthouses, they needed help with funding. Consequently, the committee recommended that the Government

of Canada provide seed money to the Heritage Canada Foundation to help them establish a fundraising campaign dedicated to raising money for the restoration and preservation of these heritage lighthouses.

Will the government reassure Canadians that it supports the protection of heritage lighthouses by including seed money for a Heritage Canada Foundation fundraising campaign in the upcoming budget?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will simply make note of the honourable senator's comments. I will ascertain whether there are any updates on these recommendations. I will simply take note of her comments with regard to the budget. I will, if I have further information, provide a written response.

[Translation]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

BUDGET—STUDY ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION EFFORTS IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR— FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the fifth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry (*supplementary budget—study on research and innovation efforts in the agricultural sector*) presented earlier this day.

Hon. Percy Mockler moved the adoption of the report.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Frum, calling the attention of the Senate to egregious human rights abuses in Iran, particularly the use of torture and the cruel and inhuman treatment of unlawfully incarcerated political prisoners.

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, I want to sincerely thank Senator Frum for using an inquiry to raise the subject of human rights in Iran. This is a very good example of the purpose of the Senate of Canada, in other words, to protect minorities and the most vulnerable.

Today I want to commend the resilience of the Baha'i community in Iran and to denounce the way they are treated in their country. The Baha'i community has no political allegiance and is not linked in any way to any opposition movement. The very principles of their faith call for them to obey the laws of their country and to abstain from any political involvement. The community is simply asking for the right to life, liberty and security of the person, and the right to education and employment.

This peaceful community has been persecuted since its earliest days in Iran; lately, however, the persecution looks more like an official state-orchestrated policy. In fact, a government memorandum, which dates back to 1993 and is still in effect today, sets out the key elements of this persecution policy. The memorandum provides explicit instructions designed to impede the progress and development of the Baha'i community. This includes officially prohibiting all members of this community from accessing higher education and certain types of employment. People are therefore being denied admission to university simply because they belong to a specific community. This discriminatory policy is systematically applied by the Iranian authorities.

Honourable senators, standing up for Canada's official language minority communities is the foundation of my political commitment, and I fully understand the importance of working to promote the growth and development of one's community and trying to gain access to high-quality education for the young members of that community.

The Baha'i community is caught in circumstances where any effort it makes could lead to imprisonment or violent attacks orchestrated by the government — the very government that is responsible for protecting these people.

Honourable senators, I would like to once again recognize the courage of this community and speak out against the deliberate violation of their fundamental rights.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Fraser, debate adjourned.)

RECREATIONAL ATLANTIC SALMON FISHING

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Meighen, calling the attention of the Senate to the economic benefits of recreational Atlantic salmon fishing in Canada.

Hon. Fernand Robichaud: Honourable senators, I was pleased to hear the Honourable Michael A. Meighen speak about the Atlantic salmon, in particular about the economic impact that this type of recreational fishing has on Atlantic Canada and the need to continue investing in the protection and conservation of the wild Atlantic salmon.

A study conducted by Halifax's Gardner Pinfold and sponsored by the Atlantic Salmon Federation determined the actual value of Atlantic salmon to be a quarter of a billion dollars. Of this amount, \$128.5 million is directly attributable to the recreational Atlantic salmon fishery. Almost half this amount is spent in New Brunswick.

It goes without saying that restoring Atlantic salmon stocks will attract more salmon fishers to the region. As a result, increased spending will contribute further to the economic development of our regions, and this includes job creation.

In a region like ours, salmon fishing is part of our culture and our natural environment, so much so that one can feel the excitement in the air when the spring salmon fishing season arrives.

• (1440)

In the spring, the salmon return to the sea to resume their migration. People get very excited about spring salmon fishing. Conversations about the weather yield to speculation about whether the salmon will show up. It is a bit like opening day of lobster season. People get restless and feverish.

The Atlantic salmon sport fishery supports some 4,000 jobs. I understand what Senator Michael Meighen meant when he said, "Just imagine how many thousands more good jobs could be created if the wild Atlantic salmon resource was restored to its full potential."

For that to happen, the federal government must continue investing in the research and support programs administered through Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

In addition, individuals and community groups must continue to help the environment by cleaning and seeding waterways. They will have to redouble their efforts to educate people and youth with a view to preserving and regenerating the Atlantic salmon population and increasing upstream migration.

In the Saint-Louis-de-Kent region, the Friends of the Kouchibouguacis — as the Saint-Louis River is known locally — have been doing important work for the past 20 years.

This volunteer organization is committed to re-establishing and monitoring fish populations and restoring habitats. The group has undertaken many activities together with local schools to raise awareness among students and the general public concerning respect for the environment and the preservation of endangered species.

To educate residents of the surrounding area, the Friends of the Kouchibouguacis offers consultations with a professional landscaper who can offer technical advice about planting native shrubs along riverbanks, preventing erosion and stabilizing water temperature.

What is more, they recommend respecting the buffer zones along the shores, using natural fertilizers, and other simple measures to protect our environment and our rivers.

As far as activities for young people are concerned, the Friends of the Kouchibouguacis organize sessions with various groups of students. For example, last fall, grade 11 students in the environmental science class at l'Assomption high school in Rogersville cleaned up the banks of the Kouchibouguacis River. They were accompanied by their teachers, members of the N.B. Natural Resources staff and members of the Friends of the Kouchibouguacis. They collected some 200 kg of waste.

Not only are they protecting the river, but they are preventing the waste from polluting the estuary or the Northumberland Strait. Another educational activity includes the installation of an aquarium with salmon eggs at a school. The students learn more about the stages of development of the salmon, while taking care of maintaining the aquarium and feeding the smolt, and finally introducing the salmon into the Kouchibouguacis River at the end of the school year.

Another activity directly related to Atlantic salmon conservation is the guided visit of a grade 5 class from the Marée-Montante school in Saint-Louis-de-Kent to the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre. The young people are able to observe salmon from the Kouchibouguacis River spawning.

The Friends of the Kouchibouguacis River also make efforts to catch spawning salmon; last year, 21 salmon were caught. Three female salmon produced some 12,000 salmon eggs, which were then fertilized at the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre.

Once hatched, those fish are put into a pool at the edge of a brook that empties into the Kouchibouguacis River. When they reach an acceptable size, they are tagged and released into the river. These fish-stocking exercises began in the early 1990s. I have joined friends in taking part in these exercises a number of times by installing a pool fed by a brook that eventually empties into the Saint-Louis River.

The Province of New Brunswick is without a doubt the centre of the Atlantic salmon fishery in North America with over 50 rivers throughout the province. Among those rivers, the Miramichi and its tributaries are known as the most productive.

To stimulate the economy related to this recreational fishery, the province invests \$2 million every year. The study Senator

Meighen told us about confirms that if the Department of Fisheries and Oceans would invest \$15 million in wild Atlantic salmon, Canadians would receive a return on their investment in six years.

For the federal government, this would be a reasonable investment for the conservation, protection and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon stocks, thereby ensuring economic spinoffs and jobs for rural and shoreline communities in New Brunswick and the other Atlantic provinces.

Honourable senators, I think that the activities of the volunteers, combined with provincial and federal government investments, would ensure long-term conservation and regeneration of Atlantic salmon stocks and would also offer the residents of Atlantic Canada increased opportunities for economic development — all the while, protecting our natural heritage.

(On motion of Senator Hubley, debate adjourned.)

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION ADOPTED

Leave having been given to revert to Government Notices of Motions:

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(h), I move:

That when the Senate adjourns today, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, February 28, 2012, at 2 p.m.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 28, 2012, at 2 p.m.)

Thursday, February 16, 2012

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SENATE



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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

The Senate met at 2 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, there have been consultations among the parties, and it has been agreed that photographers may be allowed on the floor of the Senate for this afternoon's meeting, so that they may photograph the swearing-in of a new senator with as little disruption as possible.

[English]

NEW SENATOR

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I have the honour to inform the Senate that the Clerk has received a certificate from the Registrar General of Canada showing that Vernon Darryl White has been summoned to the Senate.

INTRODUCTION

The Hon. the Speaker having informed the Senate that there was a senator without, waiting to be introduced:

The following honourable senator was introduced; presented Her Majesty's writ of summons; took the oath prescribed by law, which was administered by the Clerk; and was seated:

Hon. Vernon Darryl White, of Ottawa, Ontario, introduced between Hon. Marjory LeBreton, P.C., and Hon. Michael L. MacDonald.

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that the honourable senator named above had made and subscribed the declaration of qualification required by the Constitution Act, 1867, in the presence of the Clerk of the Senate, the Commissioner appointed to receive and witness the said declaration.

• (1410)

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hon. Noël A. Kinsella: Honourable senators, I rise to report to the Senate on the presentation of Diamond Jubilee greetings and good wishes from honourable senators to Her Majesty the Queen.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

A week ago, on Tuesday, February 21, 2012, I had the great honour of being received in audience at Buckingham Palace. Her Majesty expressed her deep appreciation and gratitude to honourable senators for their warm and generous wishes on the occasion of her diamond jubilee.

[English]

Honourable senators, it was indeed a high honour to be received in audience by the Queen, who expressed her deep appreciation and gratitude to honourable senators for your generous and warm wishes on the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. It is a pleasure to report that Queen Elizabeth was in fine form and was actively engaged in the discussion. The Queen knew that the diamond jubilee stained glass window had been installed over the Senate entrance to the Centre Block of Parliament and that the dedication ceremony had taken place. After expressing her pleasure at the successful completion of this project, Her Majesty commanded me to convey to all honourable senators the high regard in which Her Majesty holds this honourable house together with an assurance of Her Majesty's continuing benevolence.

[Translation]

Her Majesty commanded me to convey to all honourable senators assurances of her highest regard and continuing benevolence.

[English]

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

CONGRATULATIONS ON INDUCTION OF MR. GRAHAM DOWNEY TO REV. DR. W.P. OLIVER WALL OF HONOUR

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, February is Black History Month, the time of year when we explore the history and contributions that African Canadians have made to Canada and to our society.

In Nova Scotia, we celebrate this as African Heritage Month.

Each year, the Black Cultural Society of Nova Scotia recognizes someone who has made exceptional contributions to the community. The Reverend Dr. W.P. Oliver Wall of Honour is in memory of Reverend Dr. William Oliver, who has been described as "Nova Scotia's passionate defender of equality." The name should sound familiar; you may not know it, but Senator Oliver is Dr. William Oliver's half-brother.

This past February 11, the Reverend Dr. W. P. Oliver Wall of Honour was awarded to one Graham Downey. A long-time friend and colleague, Graham was the first Black city alderman in the history of Halifax, a position he was elected to for over 25 years. He also served as deputy mayor.

Indeed, his grandson, Jerome Downey, even ran for Halifax Regional Municipal Council in 2008, the youngest candidate in that election at 23.

You can see that politics and community service run deep in the Downey family. A staunch defender of his community, municipal leadership is not the only thing Graham is known for. He and his brother Billy owned the famous Arrow's Club in Halifax.

An Hon. Senator: Ever been there?

Senator Mercer: Yes, many times.

Billy was the recipient of the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award from the African Nova Scotian Music Association. Music and culture also run deep in this family.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Arrow's Club was the place to be. It was the place where Black Haligonians could gather to celebrate their culture in a city where, as in so many others, segregation still existed to a certain extent. Honourable senators, the Arrow's Club hosted such acts as Teddy Pendergrass, Ben E. King, and Ike and Tina Turner, but also local musicians such as Gordon and Harold Johnston, and Linda Carvery. I have spent a few hours in the Arrow's Club over the years with many of my friends in the African Nova Scotian community, and the Downeys made the place happen. They created a whole atmosphere of entrepreneurship in the entertainment business for people in their community.

Honourable senators, please join me in congratulating Graham Downey for the honour that he has received from the Black Cultural Society of Nova Scotia. We also add our gratitude to Graham for his outstanding contribution to the African-Canadian community, the City of Halifax, and all Nova Scotians. Our sincere congratulations.

THE HONOURABLE VERNON WHITE

CONGRATULATIONS ON APPOINTMENT

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I rise today to welcome our newest colleague, Senator Vernon White, who joins us here in the upper chamber, representing the province of Ontario.

Senator White, best known to most of us as Chief White, is a native of Cape Breton who has spent three decades in the service of protecting Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Through his vast experience and knowledge, Senator White brings to the Senate of Canada a unique perspective on law enforcement. During his tenure in the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Senator White played an instrumental role in increasing the number of

Aboriginal police officers in northern communities, where day-to-day policing, because of the diversity and uniqueness of the population, is vastly different than in Canada's biggest cities and smallest towns.

Senator White's tenure with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police also took him to Halifax and later to Ottawa, where he concluded this stage of his career as Assistant Commissioner for Information and Identification.

Many would be satisfied with such a lengthy and celebrated career in Canada's national police force, but Senator White certainly did not rest on those laurels. With an unrivaled work ethic, which those of us fortunate enough to be citizens of Ottawa can attest to very well, he was on to greater challenges and increased responsibility. Senator White embarked on a new phase of his career in law enforcement when he was named Chief of the Durham Regional Police in 2005, a post he held until he was recruited to take up the chief's position in Ottawa. On May 22, 2007, Vernon White was sworn in as police chief in Canada's capital, a position he held until he was summoned to the Upper Chamber on the recommendation of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, effective February 21.

During his long service in law enforcement, Senator White was often a vocal proponent of many of our government's initiatives to make Canada a safer place for families, seniors, and those most vulnerable.

• (1420)

Honourable senators, I am so pleased that Senator White will bring his expertise and advice to the work we do here in this chamber, playing a pivotal role in improving the lives of our young people and the vulnerable, as I spoke of a moment ago, while at the same time ensuring that the government's important reforms to the Canadian justice system continue to protect and serve Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

It is my great honour to welcome you, Senator White, to the upper chamber of Canada's Parliament.

[Translation]

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

Hon. Andrée Champagne: Honourable senators, who among us has not had the opportunity, at least once in their life, to enjoy one of the many Cirque du Soleil shows?

Watching Cirque du Soleil's spectacular performance at the Oscars on Sunday, I nearly forgot that many Americans are still discovering Cirque du Soleil and I was transported back 30 years.

In 1985 I had the honour of leading the department in charge of International Youth Year, which had been proclaimed by the United Nations. We had a very special program at the time that helped young people find summer jobs and realize their dreams.

One of the applications we received was from a group in Baie-Saint-Paul, Quebec. The group was preparing some shows to be performed in Vancouver over the summer. They wanted to add

some young people from the region to the existing troupe, in order to introduce them to various disciplines in the circus world. The program could not pay very much — just enough to allow the company to hire a few young people. The hope was that some of those young people would learn to love the circus life and become active members of the troupe for years to come. The rest is history, as they say, since Cirque du Soleil has achieved a level of success that no one could have imagined in 1985.

As a token of thanks for this initial help from the federal government — of course, more support followed over the years — Cirque du Soleil sent me a quilted cotton vest in the Cirque's own colours and with its logo at the time. Believe it or not, I still have that vest and still wear it with pride from time to time.

There was one other unforgettable moment at the Oscars that night. Christopher Plummer, originally from Montreal, was finally recognized by his peers after a remarkable career spanning some 60 years. We can all be very proud of his achievements.

Fortunately, actors are not subject to the same restrictions as senators, or else Christopher Plummer, who is 82, would never have won that Oscar.

Another extraordinary moment Sunday evening was the coronation of *The Artist*, and its leading man, Jean Dujardin. How did this French movie win all these awards?

Certain critics — among them Michel Drucker of *Vivement dimanche* on TV5 — said that it was easy to explain. In light of the fact that it was a silent movie, it was not difficult to understand: "When we French keep quiet, everyone likes us."

THE LATE MR. PIERRE JUNEAU, O.C.

Hon. Marie-P. Poulin: Honourable senators, sadly, last week Canada lost one of the greatest promoters of Canadian culture that our country has ever known. Pierre Juneau passed away after a remarkable career, serving as president of the CBC, where I had the honour of working with him, and also at the CRTC and the NFB.

Pierre Juneau was more than just a talented administrator. Above all, he was a passionate champion of Canadian identity, Canada's cultural and artistic expression, and the role of public broadcasting in developing Canadian talent and bringing it to the people. Honourable senators, we are indebted to Pierre Juneau for instilling in Canadians the pride that burns in us today.

Pierre Juneau understood long before others that Canadian unity requires that we promote our cultural identity, in French and in English, with complete respect for the heritage of the First Nations.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the music industry recognized his important contribution by naming the Juno awards after him in 1971.

[Senator Champagne]

The challenge of Canadian content in the media, which he articulated in his 1972 address to the Empire Club, long before the Internet era, remains just as true and prophetic today. He said:

[English]

To preserve and develop our ability to create and produce our own imagery is something we simply cannot do without. To enable ourselves to see everything, including ourselves, through our own eyes and our own systems of production and diffusion, will require a long and persevering effort.

[Translation]

Indeed, Pierre Juneau met that challenge and his efforts paid off. His vigilance is still needed today.

Honourable senators, Pierre Juneau had other passions that were not as widely known, which I got to see when he was my boss and mentor at the CBC. In addition to being a talented tennis player, he was tenacious and consistent, both in his sporting endeavours and in his leadership. He had the courage of his convictions.

Pierre Juneau was also a father and a very devoted family man. He thought Canada should be the aggregate of the values that our own families stand for. The values of goodness and justice should prevail in family life and in Canadian society. Pierre Juneau was good and just in both.

He will be deeply missed. To his wife, Fernande Juneau, to his children, André, Martin, Isabelle and their families, I offer my sincere condolences.

Honourable senators, dear colleagues, every time I see a television show that talks about us, every time a Canadian artist or film achieves success abroad, I will thank Pierre Juneau for his leadership, which, again, helped make me even prouder to be Canadian.

[English]

MS. SHARMEEN OBAID-CHINOY

CONGRATULATIONS ON ACADEMY AWARD

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan: Honourable senators, today I want to celebrate the achievement of a Canadian who has been overlooked amongst our nation's Academy Award winners.

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, a dual citizen of Canada and Pakistan, won the Oscar on Sunday for best documentary, short subject. Her film, *Saving Face*, which she co-directed and co-produced along with American filmmaker Daniel Junge, chronicles women who have been victims of acid attacks in Pakistan and the plastic surgeon working to help them. This is a critical issue, as 70 per cent of acid attack victims are women under 18 years of age.

While the subject of her documentary is a tragic one, and one that is not unique to Pakistan, Ms. Obaid-Chinoy asserts that she centres on the victory, not the loss, associated with this issue. Her film focuses on the heroes who help those in need and the dignity of the victims who cope with their disfigurements.

For her, the most memorable moment of the film occurs when the lead character gives birth to a boy and decides to name him after the doctor who treated her rather than the husband who is her attacker. She wants her son to grow up with the doctor as his role model, instead of his own father.

Ms. Obaid-Chinoy, a renowned journalist and filmmaker who has written for newspapers in Canada and the United States, also received an Emmy Award in 2010. Amongst her work is a documentary, *Highway of Tears*, which examines Aboriginal women in Canada who have gone missing along British Columbia's Highway 16.

In her Oscar acceptance speech, Ms. Obaid-Chinoy dedicated her award to "all the women in Pakistan who are working for change." I too have experienced this first-hand. It is truly the women of Pakistan who are transforming the nation and promoting a positive image of the country.

I hope you will join me in praising Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy as one of those women. Congratulations on winning Pakistan's first ever Academy Award and for bringing a noteworthy Oscar to Canada.

• (1430)

ORGAN DONATION

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, earlier this month, the Canadian Institute for Health Information released a report showing that the need for donated organs is far higher than the number of Canadians who choose to donate. In fact, the number of donations for 2010 was the same as in 2006. Though more than 1,000 living and deceased individuals made organ donations in 2010, about 4,500 people were left on waiting lists. Sadly, 229 died while waiting.

The possibility that more deaths will result from a stagnant donation rate is a real concern. For example, the vast majority of people on the list are waiting for a kidney. The report notes that the number of patients diagnosed with kidney failure has more than doubled since 1991. It is expected that this number will keep increasing. As rates of conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes go up, more kidneys will be needed than ever.

Luckily, the campaign to have more Canadians sign up to be organ donors has seen some recent success. In January, a young Ontario woman awaiting a double lung transplant, Helene Campbell, challenged singer Justin Bieber to support organ and blood donation. He did, and Ontario's Trillium Gift of Life Network saw a rush of people registering online to be organ donors. Ms. Campbell continued her campaign with an appearance on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* less than two weeks ago. I wish her success, both for her health and for her mission to increase organ donations.

Honourable senators, I would like to encourage everyone to be an organ donor. Depending on the rules in your province, you can simply sign an organ donor card or have your desire to donate indicated on your health card or driver's licence. Please discuss your wishes with your family. In many provinces, the family's consent is required for organ donation.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those Canadians who have already taken the steps necessary to be an organ donor. Your compassion and remarkable generosity will offer hope to the thousands of your fellow Canadians who are waiting for a transplant.

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO CHINA

Hon. JoAnne L. Buth: Honourable senators, with a population of 1.3 billion on a land area smaller than that of Canada, the country of China is an important market for Canadian agricultural products. In 2010, agricultural exports to China were valued at \$2.6 billion. As the income and disposable wealth of Chinese consumers increases, the consumption of vegetable oil and meat will continue to rise, resulting in a growing market for Canadian products.

I recently travelled to China with Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. This was not an entirely new experience for me, as in my previous work in the canola industry I had been to China many times on market development and market access issues. This mission reconfirmed the importance of the Canadian government's continuing efforts to strengthen the relationships with the Chinese government to support our businesses. China is a remarkable country filled with many opportunities, and Canada needs to be front and centre to continue to grow our trade, thereby creating more jobs for Canadians.

Canadian farmers and ranchers produce the best products in the world, but with our relatively small population in Canada we cannot consume it all. As an example, over 90 per cent of grain and oilseed products are exported. Market opportunities are critical to the continued success of our farmers and our agricultural industry. Match China's demand with Canadian production and our need for export markets, and we see tremendous opportunity. Demand from China brings more global market competition, resulting in better price stability and better prices for farmers, ranchers and the entire agricultural value chain. The Government of Canada initiatives in developing new demand and addressing trade barriers are key to the profitability of all sectors of the agriculture industry.

Based on his efforts in market development and market access issues, Minister Ritz was able to make several important announcements in China. These included market access for beef tallow, more detailed and technical discussions on access for beef and dairy cattle, and increased trade in canola meal and swine genetics. This additional opportunity could exceed \$350 million annually, putting more dollars into farmers' and ranchers' pockets.

Honourable senators, the nature of business and trade is about relationships. As agriculture businesses look to increasing global demand, the improved relationships between Canada and China, which have been cultured by the Prime Minister and Minister Ritz, will ensure that Canada is poised to meet China's demand for safe, top-quality food and food products, supporting farmers, ranchers, jobs at home and a stronger Canadian economy.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

[Translation]

MR. DANIEL GRAFTON HILL, O.C., O.ONT.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, as Black History Month draws to a close, I draw your attention to the life and contributions of Daniel Grafton Hill — Dan Hill, as I knew him. He was a human rights advocate, sociologist, public servant and a Canadian Black historian. He was born in 1923 and raised in the western United States. He graduated from Howard University in Washington, D.C., in 1949.

After taking a year to study abroad in Norway, where he was free to move about and associate with whomever he wanted, Mr. Hill decided he could no longer accept the racial segregation found in his own country. In 1950, he came to Canada, studied sociology at the University of Toronto and went on to obtain his master's degree and PhD.

Dan Hill became a researcher for the Social Planning Council of Toronto and Executive Secretary of the North York Social Planning Council. He also lectured at the University of Toronto. With his PhD in sociology and a decade of experience as an activist in civil rights, he became the first Director of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

In 1984, he was appointed Ontario Ombudsman. While there, he created crucial outreach programs for traditionally excluded groups, particularly for Canada's Aboriginal people. Following his retirement in 1989, he became a member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

Mr. Hill also held a number of advisory positions during this time, including Adviser to the President of the University of Toronto on Human Rights and Civil Liberties and Adviser to the Toronto Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations. I had the great opportunity to have his advice and friendship over many years.

Already a noted authority, Mr. Hill became an accomplished author by writing a series of articles about the history of Blacks in Canada. As a founding member of the Ontario Black History Society, he wrote his best known publication, the 1981 book, *The Freedom Seekers, Blacks in Early Canada*, which was approved as a curriculum for high schools in various Canadian provinces.

Dan Hill passed away in 2003. He left two notable sons: Dan Hill, singer and songwriter; and Lawrence Hill, noted author. However, his legacy can be seen in all that he accomplished. He, himself, said it this way:

... we have not yet reached the promised land of the just society. ... But that is no reason to abate our efforts. There is simply too much at stake. From the hindsight of history, one lesson is very clear—so long as the rights of even one are abused, abridged or abrogated—then the freedom of all is in peril. ...

Thank you, Dan Hill.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**THE ESTIMATES, 2011-12****SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C) TABLED**

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012.

[English]

THE ESTIMATES, 2012-13**PARTS I AND II TABLED**

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, Parts I and II of the 2012-13 Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013.

[Translation]

LABOUR**CANADIAN ARTISTS AND PRODUCERS
PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS TRIBUNAL—
2010-11 ANNUAL REPORT TABLED**

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour of tabling, in both official languages, the annual report of the Canadian Artists and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2011.

• (1440)

[English]

SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITIES BILL**NINTH REPORT OF LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE PRESENTED**

Hon. Hon. John D. Wallace, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, presented the following report:

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

The Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs has the honour to present its

NINTH REPORT

Your committee, to which was referred Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and

Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, has, in obedience to the order of reference of Friday, December 16, 2011, examined the said Bill and now reports the same with the following amendments:

1. *Clause 2, page 3:*

(a) Replace line 26 with the following:

“(a) any listed entity, or foreign state whose immunity is lifted under section 6.1 of the *State Immunity Act*, or other person that”; and

(b) Replace line 29 with the following:

“(b) a foreign state whose immunity is lifted under section 6.1 of the *State Immunity Act*, or listed entity or other”.

2. *New clause 3.1, page 5:* Add before line 10 the following:

“3.1 Section 2 of the Act is amended by adding the following in alphabetical order:

“terrorist activity” in respect of a foreign state has the same meaning as in subsection 83.01(1) of the *Criminal Code*, provided that a foreign state set out on the list referred to in subsection 6.1(2) does the act or omission on or after January 1, 1985.”.

3. *Clause 5, page 7:* Add after line 8 the following:

“(11) Where a court of competent jurisdiction has determined that a foreign state, set out on the list in subsection (2), has supported terrorism, that foreign state is also not immune from the jurisdiction of a court in proceedings against it that relate to terrorist activity by the state.”.

4. *Clause 6, page 7:* Replace line 15 with the following:

“that foreign state for its support of terrorism or its terrorist activity”.

5. *Clause 7, page 7:*

(a) Replace line 22 with the following:

“used by it to support terrorism or engage in terrorist activity;”; and

(b) Replace line 31 with the following:

“support of terrorism or its terrorist activity and to property other”.

6. *Clause 9, page 8:* Replace line 32 with the following:

“that foreign state for its support of terrorism or its terrorist activity”.

Your committee has also made certain observations, which are appended to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN D. WALLACE
Chair

(For text of observations, see today's Journals of the Senate, p. 905.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

(On motion of Senator Wallace, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[Translation]

THE ESTIMATES, 2011-12

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C)

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

THE ESTIMATES, 2012-13

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013, with the exception of Parliament Vote 10.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY
OF PARLIAMENT TO STUDY VOTE 10

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Parliament Vote 10 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013; and

That a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House accordingly.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

L'ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE
DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

SEMINAR ON "TAKING LEGISLATIVE ACTION
TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS",
MARCH 30-APRIL 1, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) respecting its participation at the seminar, "Taking Legislative Action to End Violence Against Women and Girls", organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the National Assembly of Burkina Faso, held from March 30 to April 1, 2011, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

MEETINGS OF THE COOPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND
THE PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK FOR THE FIGHT
AGAINST HIV/AIDS, MAY 23-27, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) respecting its participation at the meeting of the Cooperation and Development Committee and the meeting of the Parliamentary network for the fight against HIV/AIDS, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from May 23 to 27, 2011.

SEMINAR ON THE ROLES OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL,
CIVIL AND FAMILY LIFE AND ON IMPLEMENTING
THE APF'S CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF
ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN,
OCTOBER 26-27, 2011—REPORT TABLED

Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) respecting its

participation at the seminar on the roles of women in political, civil and family life, and on implementing the APF Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, held in Budapest, Hungary, from October 26 to 27, 2011.

NATIONAL FINANCE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE
COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTINGS
AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding rule 58(1)(a), I give notice that, later this day, I will move:

That, until March 31, 2012, for the purposes of any study of a bill, the subject matter of a bill or estimates, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance:

- a) have power to sit even though the Senate may then be sitting, with the application of rule 95(4) being suspended in relation thereto; and
- b) be authorized, pursuant to rule 95(3)(a), to sit from Monday to Friday, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for a period exceeding one week.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[English]

QUESTION PERIOD

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

JOB BANK

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Nearly one and a half million Canadians are out of work. Many of these Canadians use the federal government's Job Bank, which is an electronic listing of jobs provided by employers all across the country. However, when one attempts to use Job Bank now, one gets this message:

Job Bank and Job Bank for Employers are currently unavailable due to technical difficulties.

That website has been out of service for at least 10 days. Why has it taken so long to repair a much-needed resource for the unemployed?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I thank the honourable senator for bringing this matter to my attention. I do not know what has

caused the interruption of service of the Job Bank call centre. I will take the honourable senator's question as notice. I will attempt to ascertain as soon as possible the reason for this and when we might expect it to be up and running again.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Hon Elizabeth Hubley: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I was pleased to see that on Wednesday, February 15 the government tabled a copy of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and an explanatory memorandum in the other place. This is the first step toward ratification of the treaty and I look forward to finally seeing the legislation to that effect.

I am especially interested in seeing how the government will interpret Article 21 of the convention. Article 21 is important because it outlines military interoperability provisions between states that have ratified the convention and those that have not.

When negotiating the treaty, Canada worked hard with other like-minded states to ensure that Article 21 would achieve a high humanitarian standard while at the same time allowing Canada and participating allies to engage in joint military operations with allies not party to the convention, namely, the United States.

Can the leader provide us with some assurance that, when this legislation is tabled, Article 21 will be interpreted according to the highest humanitarian standards and will not undermine Canada's commitment to the principles of the convention?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, our government participated actively in the negotiations on the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We were very pleased to be among the first countries to sign the convention in Oslo in December 2008. Canada believes the convention is an important tool to protect civilians against the use of cluster munitions. Preparations are well under way for ratification. As the honourable senator pointed out, this treaty was tabled in the House of Commons on February 15.

In order to fully ratify the treaty, legislation is required. We expect and hope that this legislation will be introduced very soon.

• (1450)

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

COMMEMORATION OF THE WAR OF 1812

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. We recently had the pleasure of attending Winterlude ceremonies and activities in Ottawa and at Jacques Cartier Park on the other side of the river.

Some of the "Stand on Guard for Canada" activities commemorated the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. It is appropriate that we teach our youth about our history and the sacrifices made to protect our country.

However, I found it difficult to accept that weapons were put in the hands of children to have them reflect on how Canada was defended. Even when we have open door days on our military bases, we never put weapons in the hands of children. We do not allow them to play, as Mr. Trépanier said, cowboys and Indians. We refuse to do so. Furthermore, we signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which states that children under 18 should not bear arms.

Will this type of commemoration be repeated when we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the First World War?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Our history is our history, and the War of 1812, for those of us who —

An Hon. Senator: Were there?

Senator LeBreton: Practically. Actually, Captain John Le Breton, founder of LeBreton Flats, served for the British in Lundy's Lane, as I recall. I do not know the exact circumstances of the incident that the honourable senator describes, but I do know that the commemoration of the War of 1812 is a very important part of Canada's history. It defined Canada at the beginning of what we now know as Canada. I know there are re-enactment ceremonies taking place, especially in areas where various parts of the War of 1812 were fought. I have been at re-enactment ceremonies in Prescott, Ontario, at Fort Wellington. There were many people involved, including young people. I would suggest to the honourable senator that having our young people participate in a re-enactment ceremony of part of our history is hardly in line with any fears about arming or promoting weapons use by our children.

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: I fully support teaching our history to young people. Disciplined force must be used at times by soldiers who have to fight to defend our country. However, there is a difference between that and having a kiosk where kids as young as 9, 10 or 12 years old can play with weapons, aiming them at one another and so on. Furthermore, the person in charge of the activity says, "It's no big deal; we have all played cowboys and Indians." However, when we played cowboys and Indians, it was the cowboys against the Indians, and during the War of 1812, the Indians, the First Nations people, were our allies. Without them, we would have lost the war.

Can you assure us that greater tact will be used during future commemorations, that weapons will not be put in the hands of children in order to let them play soldier. Soldiers, incidentally, have a very serious duty to defend our country, a completely different role in which we do not want to involve our children at such a young age.

[English]

Senator LeBreton: I appreciate the honourable senator's concern in this regard, but we are talking about an important part of Canadian history. Certainly no one would equate re-enactment ceremonies, or any part of our history, with somehow tainting the minds of our young people in teaching them our history. I was listening to the honourable senator's preamble to his question. Right now, in society, we have video games that are extremely aggressive and dangerous. Our children — and this is only a personal point of view — are learning absolutely nothing from that.

I do not know exactly what the display was in Jacques Cartier Park, but I do know there is a great deal of interest, and there should be. I do not think Canadians know enough about our history. I know when I went to school, which was a long time ago, history happened to be one of my better subjects. Thank God, I was not judged on my mathematical skills. In any event, I do not believe teaching our young people and giving them information on an important milestone in Canadian history is in any way contributing to a future situation where they may determine that the use of firearms and guns is something they would want to pursue.

Senator Dallaire: I am not sure if we are losing something in the exchange here. This was not a commemoration process where we have historically seen people re-enact things in a structured way.

This was one of the most pejorative pedagogical tools imaginable to represent the history of this country by putting the semblance of weapons in the hands of children, having them shoot each other in a sort of game, and saying they are learning history. I would request that in the processes of the future, in commemoration, we do not need that perverse pedagogical tool to educate our youth about the sacrifices needed to keep this country free, sacrifices that we have had in the past, and to educate them on that process.

As she is preparing all these commemorations, one of them which my father-in-law commanded — the regiment that fought at Châteauguay in 1813 and has a strong history — I would like to request that the leader look into the events being planned and that we do not go that route anymore, please.

Senator LeBreton: I have great respect for the honourable senator's views, but I must strongly disagree with the premise of his question. Our history is our history. I do not have specific details about the display or whatever it was they had at Jacques Cartier Park, but our history is our history. Can you imagine, as we are trying to teach the history of our country and the sacrifices made by Canadians in World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict and elsewhere, if we somehow did not also point out the tools that were used? The War Museum on LeBreton Flats would be an empty cavern if we could not teach our children. By the way, there is also a great history display on the War of 1812 in the War Museum.

I totally disagree with the premise of the honourable senator's question and his remark. I do not believe that we can rewrite history. History is history, and people have to understand all of the aspects of history: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Senator Dallaire: We are not arguing about the history; we are arguing about how we are teaching it and how we are subsidizing those who are teaching it, that is to say, that event. In our history, 12-year-olds did not fight in the War of 1812. Nine year olds did not fight. In fact, they suffered because of the fighting. There is no link between children being armed and our history. In fact, there is no link in any sort of responsible pedagogical method of educating people with having them use weapons to play with in order to understand what happened.

• (1500)

By the way, in the Canadian War Museum, no one plays with those weapons. They observe them, they are shown what they can do, and they are educated on that in a structured way. Yes, we have to explain what happens. However, we do it in a fashion that is respectful of the education processes that we have in this country and that shows the respect we have for those who really have to carry those weapons and use them against other human beings.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I guess we will just have to agree to disagree. Again, as I mentioned, I am not familiar with how the display was presented or how people participated in it. I take the honourable senator's word for it. To me, we are not poisoning the minds of our young. We are not teaching them to be aggressive. We are simply using history to teach our young people what transpired and what made this country great. The War of 1812 happens to be a part of that history.

COMMEMORATION OF HISTORICAL EVENTS

Hon. Percy E. Downe: Honourable senators, I heard Senator LeBreton talking about how "our history is our history." I wonder if she could advise whether the Government of Canada will be funding any celebration of General Wolfe's victory at the Plains of Abraham.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, we are talking about the War of 1812. We are talking about seminal moments in Canadian history. I will not respond to the question. I will simply take it as notice.

Senator Downe: Our history is our history. I would assume the minister is certainly not trying to rewrite that historical event. If one is funding commemorations, one cannot be selective in funding some but not others. Can the leader find out if the government intends to fund it?

Senator LeBreton: Actually, our history is our history. I am well familiar with the event in history that the honourable senator cites. I did learn about it in our history books, but I have no further comment. I will simply take the question as notice.

An Hon. Senator: Introduce a motion.

Senator Downe: Honourable senators, the leader indicated that part of the problem was that younger Canadians are not aware of their history, unlike when she attended school. By funding events across Canada, we are making Canadians aware. Is this one of the events the government will fund?

Senator LeBreton: I do know — and my colleague Senator Verner was a crucial part of this — that the four hundredth anniversary celebration of Quebec City was funded by the government, and it was very well attended. I think it contributed greatly to Canadians' knowledge of the important role played in the founding of our nation by the province of Quebec and also the history of that great city, Quebec City. Senator Verner was one of the people who was instrumental in making sure that event happened, and that was part of our history.

With regard to the specific question, as I mentioned, I will take it as notice.

Senator Downe: I am glad Senator LeBreton raised the four hundredth anniversary of Quebec because I, too, think it was a wonderful event. I congratulate everyone involved in it. I understand that the Government of Canada spent \$120 million on the four hundredth anniversary of celebration of Quebec.

For the four hundredth anniversary of Cupids in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Government of Canada spent over \$4 million, which worked out to over \$5,400 per person, given the size of Cupids at 790 people.

I am wondering what Prince Edward Islanders can expect for the one hundred fiftieth anniversary celebration of the 1864 conference.

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I remember all of the representations from our colleagues from Newfoundland and Labrador about the great event in Cupids. I hope the honourable senator is not suggesting that the government should not have marked that great event. That is what I took from his comments. In any event, he seems to be obsessed with the fact that we marked that wonderful occasion, and all of the celebrations that were undertaken in observation of the four hundredth anniversary of Quebec City are a matter of public record.

I have not been party to any discussions, honourable senators. I know in the past there have been great celebrations in regard to the different events in Charlottetown, so I will simply take that question as notice.

Senator Downe: Honourable senators, the leader is absolutely wrong about my interpretation of the Cupids commemoration. I am delighted that they had the funding. I am delighted they had a per capita funding of \$5,400, and I hope that will be the standard that Prince Edward Island will get, although I am not sure it will be.

I wonder if the minister will advise us, preferably in writing, with respect to the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the 1864 conference that led to the founding of this country — nothing could be more historical — what level of funding Prince Edward Island can expect, so it can get the planning under way for the celebration in 2014.

Senator LeBreton: I thank the honourable senator for the question. I will take it as notice.

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, if our history is our history, then I wonder whether the Leader of the Government could tell us why her government has not allocated anything whatsoever to the recognition of the thirtieth anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, for which, we all know, many Canadian men and women have been fighting and dying for in places like Afghanistan. It is relevant to the core tenets of our democracy and rights and should, in fact, be elevated for every child across this country.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): I guess we will have to celebrate the first, tenth, twentieth, thirtieth, fortieth and fiftieth anniversary of your birthday, Senator Mitchell. The fact of the matter is that historical events are usually celebrated after a considerable passing of time, not 30 years.

DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Claude Carignan: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Tardif on February 2, 2012, concerning the appointment of the Canada Post arbitrator.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Dawson on February 8, 2012, concerning bilingual services.

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

SECOND-LANGUAGE TRAINING— LINGUISTIC DUALITY

(Response to question raised by Hon. Claudette Tardif on February 2, 2012)

On June 26, 2011, Bill C-6, *An Act to provide for the resumption and continuation of postal services (Act)* received Royal Assent. The *Act* ended the work stoppage affecting Canada Post Corporation and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and sent outstanding issues to arbitration.

On July 22, 2011, the Honourable Justice Coulter A. Osborne was appointed as arbitrator pursuant to the *Act*. On August 18, 2011, CUPW filed an application with the Federal Court challenging the appointment of the Honourable Justice Coulter A. Osborne.

On October 20, 2011, the Federal Court stayed the proceedings of the arbitration between Canada Post and CUPW until the Court decides on CUPW's challenge of his appointment. On November 1, 2011, the Honourable Justice Coulter A. Osborne resigned from his position as arbitrator in the dispute.

On January 27, 2012, the Federal Court ruled on the appointment of the Honourable Coulter A. Osborne despite the fact that he had resigned from his appointment. The

Court acknowledge that the point was “moot” but nonetheless assessed that the person to be appointed as arbitrator in this dispute should possess, among other things, a certain recognized experience in labour relations and be bilingual.

The Government of Canada is currently reviewing the decision. The process to appoint a new arbitrator is underway. The parties are meeting with one another in an effort to try and select of an arbitrator that would be agreeable to both parties.

Once appointed, the arbitrator will be responsible for settling the labour dispute between the parties and imposing a new collective agreement. The arbitrator will have 90 days following his/her appointment to render his/her decision as required by the legislation, unless an extension is provided.

[Translation]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

COAST GUARD—RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRES— BILINGUAL SERVICES

(Response to question raised by Hon. Dennis Dawson on February 8, 2012)

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is dedicated to ensuring that timely and appropriate maritime search and rescue coordination and response operations are available to all Canadians. This includes mariners in Quebec.

The decision to consolidate the search and rescue coordination services currently provided by the Sub-Centre in Québec City, Quebec with those of the Joint Rescue Coordination Centres in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Trenton, Ontario will not affect marine safety.

The primary purpose of this consolidation is to improve the efficiency of maritime search and rescue coordination services by locating Canadian Coast Guard and Canadian Forces search and rescue coordinators in the same centres, enabling air and marine search and rescue coordinators to share knowledge and resources. Maritime safety will continue to be the number one priority of the Canadian Coast Guard and we recognize the critical importance of these safety services to Canadians.

A consolidation team, made up of staff from both the Coast Guard and the Department of National Defence, is in place to ensure that Halifax and Trenton have sufficient capacity and capability to effect consolidation. This includes training new coordinators and transferring local procedures and practices into the Joint Rescue Coordination Centres of Halifax and Trenton.

This consolidation will not diminish search and rescue coordination nor response resources in Quebec and will have no impact on the safety of seafarers.

[Senator Carignan]

Existing Coast Guard search and rescue service standards will be maintained, including marine expertise, local knowledge and provision of services in both official languages. Training will be conducted to ensure the proper levels of service are established and maintained in both the Halifax and Trenton centres, while bilingual capacity will be increased above the levels currently in place at both Halifax and Trenton.

Just as local knowledge is present in search and rescue coordinators, local knowledge is also present in the crews of Coast Guard vessels and staff of the Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centres, all of whom are points of contact for mariners in distress. Canadian Coast Guard officers, helicopters and vessels will continue to provide search and rescue coverage in Quebec.

[English]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CRIMINAL CODE FIREARMS ACT

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Daniel Lang moved second reading of Bill C-19, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act.

He said: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-19, entitled, Ending the Long-gun Registry Act.

I would like to begin with a quote from the poet George Santayana. He said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Allow me to explain.

Ninety-three years ago, the Canadian Parliament enacted gun control legislation requiring gun owners to obtain a permit for all firearms, including small arms, rifles and shotguns. A year later, this requirement was repealed. I refer to the debates of May 6, 1921, when then Minister of Justice Charles Doherty stated:

There has been very general representation that the existing law operated too rigorously, lent itself to abuses and subjected citizens to unnecessary annoyance.

• (1510)

Honourable senators, we find ourselves here today dealing with a situation of remarkable similarity, this time taking 17 years to reverse a law that proved just as unnecessary and annoying.

Eliminating the long-gun registry is truly a historic occasion, and the debate before us goes much deeper than the registry itself. Today, our Parliament is sending a message of trust to law-abiding long-gun owners, and they have finally been vindicated.

Honourable senators, it is important to stress that the legislation before you for your consideration is the result of the decision made by Canadians on May 2 of last year. I only have to point to my region, the constituency of Yukon. When the writ was dropped last spring, all the pollsters had the political landscape of Yukon painted the colour red. Over the course of the campaign, the elimination of the long-gun registry was one of the central election issues. On election night, the political landscape of Yukon turned blue. As we all know, this was the case in many ridings across Canada.

The long-gun registry has proven to be a complete waste of taxpayers' money. When this legislation was introduced as part of Bill C-68, former Minister of Justice Allan Rock had this to say about the cost of the bill:

We say that it will cost \$85 million.

Former Senator Jean-Louis Roux spoke in our own chamber, supporting the figure of \$85 million and denying the claims of critics that the cost of setting up the registration system would be in the range of \$500 million to \$1.5 billion.

Honourable senators, time has shown that it was even worse than this. According to the CBC, by 2004 the registry had already cost the Canadian taxpayer \$2 billion.

During the course of the study of the long-gun registry, evidence in the other place has clearly indicated its ineffectiveness. There is no evidence that the tragedy of suicides and homicides would be affected by the discontinuation of the long-gun registry.

It is also important to bring to the attention of senators that it has been reported that the data contained in the registry is inaccurate, with error rates between 43 per cent and 90 per cent. Furthermore, throughout its entire 17 years of existence, there has never been an individual who has successfully proven that the long-gun registry has prevented a single crime or saved a single life.

As the senator for Yukon, the repeal of the long-gun registry is of particular interest to me. Those of us who live in remote and northern settings have felt that the long-gun registry is discriminatory to all northerners, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike. We view our long gun as a necessary day-to-day tool, not unlike the tractor a farmer uses to plow his field. Our Aboriginal people especially feel that they were treated unfairly by the long-gun registry, and government was seen once again to be intruding into their lives.

Establishing by force of criminal law a requirement to submit to a needlessly bureaucratic process simply does not recognize this day-to-day reality. As Aboriginal elders have told me, this is a failed big-city solution forced on our people. Honourable senators, I hope you will join me in agreeing that this is patently unacceptable.

I refer again to the architect of the long-gun registry, former Justice Minister Allan Rock. It has been said that it was his view when he came to Ottawa that the only people who should have firearms were the police and the military. This is exactly the

misguided attitude that led to the fiasco of the long-gun registry. It shows a fundamental misunderstanding, not only of the culture of firearms owners, but also the understanding of crime and how one prevents it.

The goal of the long-gun registry was to reduce crime. It failed because of the simple fact that only law-abiding Canadians would ever comply. Criminals do not register their guns.

The fact of the matter is, honourable senators, that you do not reduce crime by harassing law-abiding citizens. Reducing crime is done through tough but fair sentencing. Reducing crime is done by developing a correctional system that is actually designed to correct criminal behaviour. Reducing crime is done by putting more police officers on the streets. Reducing crime is done through smart investments in preventing crimes before they happen.

Honourable senators, you reduce crime by spending taxpayers' money effectively. You do not reduce crime by spending taxpayers' money on a system that does not work.

Over the past months, many have asked, what does Bill C-19 accomplish? Allow me to explain the principles contained in this bill.

The bill will repeal the requirement to register non-restricted firearms. As I have said, these are daily tools that law-abiding rural Canadians, Aboriginals, farmers and hunters use to practise traditional, cultural and present-day necessities of life. This is the reason the registry has been such a contentious issue since its inception.

The bill also provides for the destruction of existing records held in the Canadian Firearms Registry. Honourable senators, the registry and the records are inseparable. They are one and the same. If you destroy the registry but keep the records, you are maintaining data that has no reason to be kept. I know that there has been criticism from some that the records should be maintained, but it should be noted that those same critics have also said they will reinstate the long-gun registry at the first opportunity.

Honourable senators, a commitment was made to the electorate: The long-gun registry will be scrapped. The personal information contained in the registry will be eliminated. I want to assure you that we do not find it acceptable for the creation of a registry by the back door.

This brings me to another criticism that has been levied against this legislation that I would like to address. Some have said that provinces should have access to the information contained in the registry so they can start a provincial version of this failed government policy. I disagree. This information was given by law-abiding Canadians to their national government for the express purpose of a national government program.

The long-gun registry program, upon passage of this legislation, will no longer exist and, as I have said, there is no basis for the federal government to retain citizens' personal and private information. It would be inappropriate, in my view, to share individual Canadians' private information for any other purpose.

Honourable senators, one has to ask some fundamental questions with regard to the legislation before us today. The first question: Has this system been effective? The answer is a clear no. Statistics have shown no correlation between the implementation of the long-gun registry and a decline in the criminal use of firearms.

The other question we have to ask ourselves: Was it worth the cost? Two billion dollars is a lot of money. How many police officers could have been paid? How many crime prevention programs could have been provided? We will never know because that money has been wasted.

When we work on preventing crime, particularly gun crime, we must take a focused approach. That means ensuring that only qualified, licensed individuals have firearms. It means continuing to take strong action against illegal imports of firearms. It means having enough police on the street to protect Canadians. It means investing in crime prevention and gang prevention programs. It means enforcing serious sentences to deter individuals from committing crimes with firearms.

Honourable senators, I have had the opportunity to review the debates in the Senate when the ill-fated Bill C-68 was tabled in 1995. It is important to note that there was a great deal of concern about the ramifications of the long-gun registry and its consequences, which over time proved to be true. In fact, some members from the government side, including the senator from Yukon, voted against that bill.

• (1520)

My hope, colleagues, is that when we close this final chapter on Bill C-19, members on both sides of this chamber will feel free to vote to end this taxpayers' nightmare and free our law-abiding long-gun owners from the criminal sanctions of the present law.

[Translation]

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I would like to ensure that the opposition critic, Senator Hervieux-Payette, is given 45 minutes to speak.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

[English]

Hon. Gerry St. Germain: Honourable senators, this is a great day in my life.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator St. Germain: No, it is not my birthday — I have to straighten out my cowboy boot here — but it is a great day because I predicted this would happen when Bill C-68 was passed. That is right. As the honourable senator says, I may even be a prophet, a saintly prophet. After that great speech by Senator Lang there is really not much to be said, but I will say a few words that differ slightly because I was here when Bill C-68 was passed.

[Senator Lang]

Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to Bill C-19, an act to end the long-gun registry. Many current senators were here when the Chrétien Liberal government enacted the long-gun registry through Bill C-68. At the time, most Canadians felt that creating this registry was really not necessary, that it was a misguided policy decision that would not make our communities any safer.

It was Tuesday, May 2, 1995, when the Senate decided that it would allow the government to take another piece of our individual freedoms to diminish the right of law-abiding Canadians to their enjoyment of personal property. However, three Liberal-appointed senators faced their conscience and stood with their constituents and voted against Bill C-68. Perhaps if others in this place had joined former Senator Lawson, Senator Lucier and Senator Sparrow the outcome of this overly intrusive Bill C-68 would have been different.

Ever since the passage of Bill C-68, Canadians coast to coast have fought against this law. I toured extensively through the entire country, talking to people, making certain that what I was opposing was being supported out there. I recall travelling into the Northwest Territories, and Stephen Kakfwi at the time was Minister of Justice. I arranged travel up the Mackenzie Delta and then back down to Fort Simpson. I covered all these areas, and it was unanimous that this bill was an infringement, an incursion into the lives of our Aboriginal peoples and the peoples who lived up there, not only the Aboriginals but the people in general. I spent a night at Shingle Point where the Inuit were hunting for the bowhead whale. They waited for the whale to come into this inlet. We stayed out on the land that particular night. The next morning, as we got up, a bunch of children were playing outside when a great big grizzly bear came down the mountain toward the ocean. The Inuit needed their guns for their own personal safety. They could not have them stored. They had to have their guns at the ready position, and thank God they did. They did not shoot the bear. They did what our Aboriginal peoples do — they preserved the life of the animal but scared it away with the use of a gun.

I was not the only one travelling. Members from the other place travelled as well. I listened to the concerns of thousands of law-abiding gun owners who rightly viewed Bill C-68 as a brazen attack by the government on their constitutional right to enjoyment of personal property.

Honourable senators, the bill before us will put an end to one of the most costly programs that our bureaucracy has ever administered. When the bill to enact the long-gun registry was before Parliament, the government forecasted a cost of \$2 million to set up and operate the registry. After a couple of failed starts, it took the bureaucracy over three years and millions more to finally set up and administer the registry. In 2003, Parliament was asked to approve and did approve roughly \$170 million to sustain the operation for that year alone, a long way from the \$2 million.

In 2002, Auditor General Sheila Fraser released a scathing report on the long-gun registry's questionable financial reporting methods and stated that the program was on track to cost the Canadian taxpayers over \$1 billion. In fact, the Auditor General was right again.

This particular registry also created other unwarranted impacts directly on the law-abiding gun owners of Canada. Hunters, duck hunters, whatever hunters you want to speak of, farmers and Aboriginals, many of these people who rely on their firearms as I just described to sustain their way of life or cultural traditions were forced to participate in a bureaucratic process. The purpose, to keep guns out of the hands of bad people, was never established in fact in any way, shape or form.

In a 1995 memo, a copy of which I still have in my possession, then Minister Allan Rock states that no long guns will be banned under the provisions set out in Bill C-68. Honourable senators, this could not be further from the truth, and I will illustrate briefly with a recent action and the decision of the registry's program administrator, the RCMP.

In late December, registered owners of a certain small .22 calibre — that is the smallest calibre there is in rifles — received letters from the RCMP-administered Canada Firearms Program demanding the surrender of the firearm without compensation because the RCMP, on their own initiative, decided to reclassify it from a non-restricted to a prohibited firearm. The RCMP's reason was because it resembled the likeness of a military gun, even though the .22 calibre had none of the same operating features.

There are reasonable questions that should be asked here. The .22 calibre firearm is the smallest calibre of long gun available. Was the reclassification necessary? Was the safety of the public at risk? Was the true and ultimate purpose of Bill C-68, the purpose of the registry, which in this case provided the RCMP with the necessary power to confiscate the long guns in question, to eradicate firearms from Canadian society? Not according to the promises made to the long-gun owners by former Minister Allan Rock.

Honourable senators, Canada has had laws restricting the possession and the use of firearms since 1877, along with a centralized registry for restricted firearms since 1951 and a classification system of prohibited and restricted weapons and non-restricted long guns since 1968.

In addition, a screening system for those wishing to acquire any firearm, including non-restricted hunting rifles and shotguns, was established in 1977. This firearms acquisition certificate screening system was tightened up in 1991. What I have just outlined is known as the Canadian Firearms Information System.

Honourable senators, the main purpose of Bill C-68, the Firearms Act, was supposed to be to improve public safety. In the Supreme Court of Canada reference decision, the court observed that the registry for long guns was an attempt to bring an end to the problems arising from the criminal or dangerous use of firearms in cases such as suicide, accidental shootings and domestic violence. The court said the registry sought to deter the improper use of firearms and control access to them based on the person filing the application and the type of firearm.

With all due respect, honourable senators, creating a specific non-restricted or long-gun sub-registry of the existing Canadian Firearms Information System has done nothing further to increase public safety.

• (1530)

Honourable senators, Bill C-19, seeks to remove only the requirement to register firearms that are neither prohibited nor restricted, in other words, hunting rifles. All of the other regulatory requirements, whose purpose is to make our country a safe place to live, remain in place, and they should. We should be responsible in the way we store guns, and there should be a certificate required to acquire guns.

Honourable senators, over the past 14 years, this registry has cost taxpayers over \$2 billion. During that time it has never operated efficiently or effectively. It has neither brought about the safer use of firearms nor made our community safer.

Honourable senators, I want to be clear about the intention of the bill before us. It does two things. It does not diminish the obligation concerning ownership and the safe use of firearms. However, it will eliminate the long-gun registry and the records created through this particular registry will be destroyed. That is all, plain and simple.

For the past 14 years, most Canadians believed that the long-gun registry demanded an inappropriate use of our financial and policing resources. Finally, the end of this misguided program is near.

Honourable senators can stand tall in this place and be proud in declaring to our constituents that we have undone what ought not to have been done in the first place. In the last election, the government promised to get rid of this registry. That is what Bill C-19 sets out to do. Passing this legislation is what we ought to do.

All honourable senators are encouraged to join Senator Lang and put your support behind this long-awaited legislation. A promise made by the Government of Canada is a promise kept.

Thank you. God bless everyone.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Would the honourable senator entertain a question?

Senator St. Germain: Yes.

Senator LeBreton: I think it is important that Senator St. Germain has put his comments on the record. In the tradition of the Senate, the upper chamber, the chamber of sober second thought, if my memory serves me correctly, the honourable senator gave this chamber an opportunity to demonstrate this sober second thought. I believe he moved an amendment to hoist the bill for six months so that the hysteria and temperature could be reduced, where people would be able to make a rational decision and indeed take a decision on this bill in the spirit of sober second thought.

Of course, the honourable senator was supported by his colleagues in this, but unfortunately not enough to carry the day. I want to know if the honourable senator recalls that and whether he cares to comment.

Senator St. Germain: I do recall that. We wanted to hoist the bill because emotions were running high as a result of an incident that had taken place in the country, which was regrettable.

The saddest part of it was that people like my father, who lived off the land and needed his guns to hunt so that he could provide food for our family, was being equated with some fanatic who takes a gun and shoots a group of people, regardless of where it might be, whether in California or Alberta or wherever it is, and it was totally unfair. The issue was being presented in that manner. That is what tore at my heart, because I know how much respect we had for guns when I grew up. They were part of our lives. They were like the hammer in the carpenter's hand or the stethoscope for the doctor. We were being compared to the criminal element that used these guns irresponsibly. The inference was that anyone who had to use guns or had an abundance of guns was basically a lunatic and was about to destroy humanity. That was the regrettable part of the moment and that is why I wanted the bill hoisted.

I understand. I have been a policeman. I have been there. I have been there when criminals were shooting at us. I can tell you one thing: That is not a comfortable situation. The fact remains that one gets caught up in the heat of the moment. That is why I wanted the bill hoisted, because I wanted cooler heads to prevail. There are thousands of people in North America who use guns so responsibly and for such enjoyment.

I was at the Langley Rod & Gun Club the other night where a group of young people received awards for shooting. There are Olympic competitors out of Langley, British Columbia. We were there. Mark Warawa, the MP from the other place was there, as well as several mayors from the surrounding communities. We were presenting awards to these young people, who were totally enthused with the sport of shooting. It is in that spirit that I wanted the bill hoisted, so people could cool down and think things over. That did not happen. Here we are.

Let us use all of our wisdom and sober second thought. Let us use it today as we go forward on this initiative, because I think it means a lot to many people.

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator St. Germain's time has expired. Senator Dyck would like to ask a question but Senator St. Germain would have to request more time.

Senator St. Germain: I would do so, if the honourable senator wants to ask a question.

The Hon. the Speaker: Five more minutes.

Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck: Honourable senators, I ask this question because this is a controversial bill, and Senator St. Germain gave a very good speech. As a woman, it is always a difficult question for us. The honourable senator has experience as a police officer.

What does the honourable senator say to organizations such as the YWCA, that has taken a position against the abolishment of the long-gun registry because of the situation with violence in

homes where long guns are the weapons most often used to kill women? That is an issue that tears at my heart. The YWCA claims that there has been a reduction in the number of spousal homicides since the registry, mostly women.

With the passage of this bill, what would the honourable senator say to a woman who came to him and said, "My sister was killed by someone with a long gun?" How do we come to grips with that? What is the argument for abolishing the long-gun registry when we know that these incidents happen in cases of domestic abuse? Can he convince me that there is a way to minimize that?

Senator St. Germain: I believe there are no statistics that prove that the gun registry reduced the amount of violent crime against women or men — violence against people regardless of gender.

I grew up in a household where there were guns around, and women were a part of that culture. The fact is that there are so many women who lose their lives as a result of violence. I speak of Willie Pickton. He never used a gun. If you look at all these serial murderers, in most cases there are no guns being used.

What do we restrict next? I think we have to become more aware of violence against women in all forms. If we do that and we make a concerted effort, as parents and grandparents, to go out of our way to make certain that violence is not part and parcel of anything in our families, then we will start to improve. If you want to pick on guns, you can pick on knives and a litany of things. There is a huge number of murders committed with knives. As a police officer, I can tell the honourable senator one thing. I have been to murder scenes, and I will tell you that it tears at your heart. However, you cannot overreact to anything, and you cannot penalize millions of good people for the bad acts of one. The answer lies in education and in not subjecting our young people, or anyone, to viewing violence against women in any way, shape, or form in the family.

• (1540)

I can recall my grandfather St. Germain, who was a Metis, and how kind he was to his wife. That fed down through the system. My father was married for 50-some years. I have been married for 50 years. Unfortunately, my grandfather was not married for 50 years because he did not live that long. The fact is that it was part of our culture, and there were guns all over the place. However, the families were taught about love, understanding and kindness, and not violence.

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: Honourable senators, I will be dividing my time with Senator Brown.

Honourable senators, I rise today in support of Bill C-19. I stand with law-abiding farmers, hunters and rural Canadians across our country. This legislation is particularly close to my heart, but, more than that, it was and is a rallying cry for people like me who said, "That is enough." Many Canadians felt that the gun registry was a direct attack by the Liberal Party on rural Canadians. Western Canada and the North were especially hard hit by this legislation. Following the disastrous National Energy

Program, the gun registry was the reason many Canadians began to turn their backs on the Liberal Party because it went directly into the homes and lifestyles of Canadians. Sadly, the Liberals seemed not to notice how offended people were.

I believe that after the NEP, the gun registry was the beginning of the downfall of the Liberal Party. This fight has lasted 17 years and is finally coming to an end. As the years went on and the objections continued, more and more people questioned why they were not being listened to. The Liberals were failing to connect with the voters and seemed only to care about the large centres of Toronto and Montreal.

Remember, Canadians knew that we had very tough gun laws already, and, under our government's reforms, Canadians will still need a gun licence to purchase or possess a firearm and will continue to be required to register prohibited and restricted firearms, such as handguns and assault rifles. A Canadian firearms licence requires police background checks and a certificate in firearms safety from an experienced instructor. The long-gun registry needlessly and unfairly targets law-abiding Canadians without reducing crime or keeping guns away from criminals.

I remember my father, a hunter and a long-time Liberal supporter and Liberal activist, shaking his head as he tried to explain the whys of this legislation to our community. Those explanations did not work. There was a visceral, populist reaction to the registry. It was the government against the people. These farmers and hunters, who already obeyed the law and safely stored their guns, were angry, particularly at having no voice. I attended many political rallies over the following years, watching people come out in droves, many of them former Liberals. The main issue of these farmers, these wives, these fishermen, these ordinary people was the gun registry.

Over the years, a tidal wave of resentment built, which the Liberal Party failed to see or appreciate, or simply ignored. The registry has imposed horrendous costs on the Canadian taxpayer. Liberals told Canadians it would cost \$2 million. To date, it has cost more than \$2 billion — \$2 billion spent forcing rural Canadians to waste time filling out forms and navigating red tape, all for a registry that does not work. Canadians were made to feel like criminals for their way of life, and their resentment grew.

Our government's bill will finally end this waste of taxpayers' money. We will ensure that the useless and intrusive information collected on our law-abiding Canadians will be destroyed. We will protect the privacy rights and safety of Canadians. We are serious about preventing gun crime. We have enacted mandatory minimum sentences for drive-by shootings and for using a gun in the commission of crimes. By tightening sentences, we lock up criminals who will not be on our streets committing additional crimes. Bill C-10, the safe streets and communities act, has many measures that do keep Canadians safe, far safer than the registry.

I beg you to support Bill C-19 and our government's other measures to reduce crime and keep Canadians safe. I urge all honourable senators to step back, study the progression of the gun registry, and learn the lesson. Do not listen to the people at your own peril.

Hon. Bert Brown: I thank Senator Stewart Olsen. I think she has done a very good job of what I was trying to do too. I will keep my notes shorter than I was planning to.

I have talked to a few police chiefs over the past number of years. One of them was a woman police chief. To a person, they have said that they would prefer to have the \$2 billion used for more police officers in their towns and cities than to have \$2 billion and counting used up shuffling paper.

Police have made another statement when they were called to a possible violent crime site. They have now learned to believe that guns may be in the vicinity and that they should prepare themselves with backup officers at the ready. The number of incidents where long guns are a part of a holdup are very rare. The far greater number of handguns that are smuggled into Canada through the United States border are the problem when crime scenes spring up, occurring far more often in cities than in rural towns and villages. About 98 per cent of violent crimes are committed in the city, not in the rural towns and areas.

When an economy begins to slow or fall, crime grows, and cowards look for guns, not jobs. My home has been burglarized three times in the five years I have been in this chamber.

We have now had alarms and cameras installed, and the police patrol my house every once in a while. The only way to counter violent crimes is with more armed police. Fortunately, the lunatics are few and far between. One thing is for sure — we will not stop them with pieces of paper, costing \$2 billion and growing every year.

A decade ago, I went to a gun safety instruction office. When I left, I was given an instructor's license and a cap signifying my new status. I told Senator Munson that I was going to tell this story because it is amusing. I do not see him in his seat today.

When I was there three years ago, I was in the back row, about halfway down. Senator Munson was about a desk away from me. He was kind of bored that day, and he held his head up with his hand. He looked at me and said, "Have you got a gun, Bert?" I said, "Yeah, I do, but not with me." He said, "Bring it with you tomorrow and you can shoot me with it if it is as dull as it was today." I told him that maybe he should talk to his wife about this before he got in too deep. He did, and when he came back, he said, "My wife says it is probably not legal." I said, "That is good, because I talked to my wife and she said it probably was not legal to shoot him, either."

• (1550)

I just wanted to put that in. It is a funny story. I could not get away from the fact that he had brought that up.

Honourable senators, I want to say a final comment about what happened in the tragedy years ago that really affected us so badly that we went into a federal bill right across the country. I do not think many people realize that the gun that was used at that tragic time was actually a registered gun.

I think there is no way that we could justify a \$2-billion bill to try to get more and more paperwork done on guns. I have had some experiences where I had a friend who said that he had been

talking about the gun registry, and he decided he would register his guns. He registered them all on a computer, which you can do, and then rushed them off to New Brunswick — I believe that is where it is. I said, “How did it go?” He said, “I put them all in there, and when I pushed the button for enter, they all dropped off.” I said, “What happened? What was the reason?” He said, “I do not know.” I said, “How many guns did you register on that thing?” He said, “126.” I said, “Well, I think you are only allowed to put in 10 or 12 at a time when you register through to the network.” I asked him, “So what will you do now?” He said, “Nothing.” Honourable senators, there are a lot of guns out there that were never registered and probably never will be registered.

I had another neighbour who had, I would have to say, something close to 100 guns. He was a hobbyist who wanted to buy Winchesters, which used to be important to this country in terms of the West. He would go to an auction sale and buy old Winchesters. He had no use for them at all; he just wanted to collect them. I think he had close to a hundred of them.

I would have to close my arguments with the comment that in Quebec, when this man shot 16 women, I think the true tragedy to me was the fact that he isolated the men in the room and shot all of the women. I know he was a lunatic, but, even more, I cannot understand why the men who were there made no attempt to stop him.

Hon. Anne C. Cools: Honourable senators, that event was one of enormous tragedy and of continuing concern. Some years back, I remember reading about the fact that very little was done to prevent the actions of this disturbed gunman, and that all the young men present were so overcome that they were incapable of taking action to stop him. I had read — and maybe the honourable senator knows or has heard something of it — that at least one of them committed suicide because he had difficulty accepting the fact that no action was taken by himself to prevent it. It may very well be that it was preventable, but it is a tragedy of such enormity that I think it will continue to provoke reflection on our parts for years to come.

Has the honourable senator ever heard anything to that effect?

Senator Brown: Yes, I have heard exactly what the honourable senator said, that one of them did commit suicide. I guess they could not live with the fact that they never tried to protect anyone.

The Hon. the Speaker: Continuing debate?

Hon. Yonah Martin: Honourable senators, I wanted to rise in support of this bill as an urban Canadian, a city dweller, and someone who has had the opportunity to speak to law-abiding gun owners and families that have a tradition of hunting that has been passed on through the generations. For instance, a family that I know, who lives in Metro Vancouver, has talked to me at length about the long-standing tradition of the grandfather from Italy who taught his son, who is now the father, and his grandson, and how, as a family, this is something that they enjoy. It reminds me of how we can sometimes look at the urban and rural divide,

but this is an issue and a bill that is being eagerly awaited by those in the city who are also hunters and law-abiding citizens who have had to go through cumbersome processes and paperwork. They call it “the hoops.”

I personally am neither a gun owner nor a hunter. I am married to a husband who grew up in the Kootenays, the interior of B.C., and who grew up with this tradition as well. I guess I am speaking and rising on behalf of those in the cities who also see this as a cumbersome, onerous process on them. This is not just about rural Canadians, although it is a tradition there and I recognize and respect that. City dwellers, too, are awaiting the passage of this bill.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is there further debate?

(On motion of Senator Hervieux-Payette, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

THE ESTIMATES, 2011-12

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C) ADOPTED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government)
pursuant to notice of February 28, 2012, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012.

(Motion agreed to.)

THE ESTIMATES, 2012-13

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY MAIN ESTIMATES ADOPTED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government)
pursuant to notice of February 28, 2012, moved:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013, with the exception of Parliament Vote 10.

(Motion agreed to.)

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT TO STUDY VOTE 10 ADOPTED

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government)
pursuant to notice of February 28, 2012, moved:

That the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament be authorized to examine and report upon the expenditures set out in Parliament Vote 10 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013; and

That a message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint that House accordingly.

(Motion agreed to.)

• (1600)

STUDY ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICIES, PRACTICES, CIRCUMSTANCES AND CAPABILITIES

FOURTH REPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Wallin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, for the adoption of the fourth report (interim) of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, entitled: *Answering the Call: The Future role of Canada's Primary Reserve*, tabled in the Senate on December 15, 2011.

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to talk about this report.

[English]

Honourable senators, it has taken me a bit of time to come here and I appreciate the patience of members of the committee and the chair, in particular. I have a few things that I would like to say and I have had to think about them. Of course, I am addressing the report *Answering the Call: The Future Role of Canada's Primary Reserves*.

I would encourage all honourable senators to take part in opportunities to spend time with members of the various forces. Each summer, as I understand, each of the forces provides an opportunity for senators and elected members of Parliament to participate in a way that is meaningful and provides insight into how the forces operate.

This past summer in Wainwright, Alberta, I participated, along with one member of Parliament, in a massive reserves war games exercise, which I think involved about 1,000 members of the reserves. I was deployed, if I may use that word, with an armoured reconnaissance unit. I spent two days with the group, including almost 24 hours in the field and an entire night in the dark and cold on sentry duty in an outpost setting up an observation post for a battle and an attack that were to occur the next day; and, they did occur.

It was as close to realistic as one can get with the weapons and kit and the chance to observe the inter-relationships and how reservists operated. I was immensely impressed in particular by the leadership. I was in a vehicle with three other people. One was a master corporal, a young man, who had done two tours in Afghanistan with the regular force. When he left, he was in the reserves and in his fourth year of a degree in philosophy. He was

very thoughtful and demonstrated outstanding leadership ability in so many ways. It was an impressive and very moving experience in many respects that I would recommend to all members of Parliament.

Honourable senators, I think this report is good. It reflects some excellent testimony that we received from some very insightful and excellent witnesses. In particular, what commends it to me, all honourable senators and Canadians is that it gives a relatively comprehensive analysis or listing of many of the important issues that are facing the reserves in Canada today. In many ways, the recommendation page is a checklist of some of these important issues, although not quite all of them.

For example, the report addresses the question of how the size of the primary reserves should be configured in the future, given the new international war situation that we face and the demobilization of much of our force in that specific regard.

It talks about the new roles that we should define and how we should define them for the different reserve classifications of A, B and C. It addresses the question of how we should augment the pay system for the reserves because there are some administrative and other inconsistencies and problems. It addresses how we should begin to establish the role of recruiting for the Army Reserve versus how it had been done historically with a view to mass mobilization because the world has changed. It is unlikely that will be required and hopefully it will never be required again.

The report talks about the community footprint and how the reserves have a special role and relationship with the community. These reservists come from the community and go back to it almost on a daily basis in a way that the regular forces do not do.

I could go on. It is a comprehensive list that covers that list of issues quite well.

One of the report's major strengths is that it outlines the issues we need to address with further detail and intensity — where we need to drill down. To some extent, the study was quick and, to some extent, it just hit the high points. However, there are issues that require a good deal more attention, and I would like to highlight some of those.

I mentioned in passing the question of community footprint. It is true that the reserve has a special relationship with the community. Reservists come from the community. One or two nights a week, often on weekends, they go back to the community. That is not to diminish the many reservists who spend months and months in difficult places, such as Afghanistan. In the context of this special relationship, a number of points were made. We established in the final analysis a recommendation that the community footprint — the role the reservists play within the military and the community — needs to be defined more clearly, particularly now that we have reached a kind of breather. We have gone through one phase and now there is a time to rethink, redevelop and reconsider what it is the reserves could do.

One of the areas that is becoming more prominent in the thinking around that issue, not just for the reserves but also for the regular force, is the question of humanitarian work and disaster-relief work, both domestically and internationally. We

heard some testimony and comments, and I have had other discussions, that underline the profoundly important role that the military and the reserves specifically have played and do play in humanitarian aid and disaster-relief around the world. It has been noted often the tremendous work that the reserves did with respect to the flooding in Winnipeg and the ice storms that we have had.

However, there is also a suggestion that the reserves may not always have the equipment and the training that they need to do some of those activities. For example, in one discussion that I participated in, it was mentioned that perhaps the military and reserves could participate in fire emergencies, like the devastating one in northern Alberta. The point was made that, while they certainly have the leadership, discipline and physical attributes to assist in that way, they do not have the equipment.

What kind of assessment needs to be done to establish training needs to accept this role more intensely and the equipment needs, funding and budget for the future? In one sense I hope deeply that the military will have more time to do this kind of activity because there will be far less pressure and opportunity for them to have to fight in wars. That, of course, would be a last resort, and we would hope that they would not have to do that. It may be that one way to sustain a disciplined, well-trained and active military reserve force with great morale is to give them other challenges, and those challenges could be humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

A point was made, I believe just yesterday, by a witness who said that they are anticipating more and more climate-driven disasters because the climate is changing. There is evidence of that and one does not even need the science — just walk outside or listen to the news to know that this is happening a great deal more. In the future I would like to see more emphasis and effort placed on this kind of a study by the Defence Committee.

• (1610)

A second area that is mentioned — not in passing but not in sufficient detail in the report — outlines the issues, but we need to drill down. It is with respect to employer compensation for those who see employees deployed abroad or in a way that means they cannot work for them for a period of time. This places an undue burden of a broader social responsibility — a broader national responsibility — specifically on a limited number of employers. There is experience in other jurisdictions in the world where employers are specifically compensated for that, and we need to consider it in more detail. The report makes the point that in these times of fiscal restraint, this would seem inappropriate. I am not sure that is a conclusion I would agree with.

In fact, Canada Company, which is a foundation — independent, private, set up to work in this area on behalf of Canadians and reservists — makes the point that \$8 million could fund what needs to be done to make this possible and to reduce what is currently an unfair and undue burden on many small and medium-sized employers who have reservists in their employ who then deploy; they lose their services. If it is just for eight, nine or ten months it is difficult and expensive to replace these people. They have to train someone for a short period of time, and

sometimes it is not possible to find someone in those circumstances. It puts a great burden on small and medium-sized businesses, which often suffer a great deal of burden in any event.

I would recommend that be another area where we could do more detailed study as a committee.

A third area mentioned is the question of advertising and promoting the availability of health services to reservists, particularly reservists who perhaps drift away to some extent from the military organization once they return from a place like Afghanistan; perhaps they leave the reserves or leave the services. It is a challenge to make sure they understand what is available.

However, it is also true that a health issue we are all aware of — post-traumatic stress syndrome — could become more and more prominent. There could be much more of it occurring amongst returning forces sometime after they have returned. In particular, the point was made by witnesses that this can occur because while the person is involved in the intensity of the mission — some of them have returned two, three, four times — the adrenaline is running, and the focus and sense of purpose is there. It can push aside the stresses, pressure or awareness that ultimately leads to PTSD.

Now that we are not deploying forces in that intensity or volume to places like Afghanistan, it is conceivable that once the pressure or intensity subsides, the stresses will overwhelm, and we will see more PTSD. At the very least our committee needs to stay on top of that issue, if not study it in great detail. There is an area to study. It is to make certain there are services that are equal and available between regular force personnel, reserve personnel, regular force veterans and reserve veterans to ensure that we never let these people down who have given so much and who, in many ways, have asked so little of us.

Speaking of reports that our committee could do, I would like once again to come back to an area that I think deserves profound consideration. That is the question of the RCMP and what I believe is an emerging, increasingly evident or potential problem in the culture of that organization. Of course, much of our ability to assess that to this point has simply been anecdotal. We see reports of allegations of harassment, and sometimes these are beyond allegations; they are tribunal rulings on these questions. I think where there is smoke there is fire, and that is becoming an issue we need to address.

Just this week, for example, I note that there was a case of an RCMP sergeant and a constable who had sex in an RCMP car while on duty; unforgivable, unacceptable. It is interesting to note the military had a similar case, if not exactly the same, of a general fraternizing with a lower-ranking person. Swift and definitive action was taken in that case.

In this case, after a good deal of time, a tribunal hearing ruled that the most senior participant in this particular experience, a man — could I have five more minutes?

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is leave granted, honourable senators, for five more minutes?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Mitchell: Thank you. A man was found guilty of this infraction by a tribunal under the RCMP structure, and he was docked 10 days' pay. There was a statement by one of the members of the tribunal that they had found this sergeant had lied, but they could not rule on it because the tribunal's terms of reference did not include that. That is what happened to the man, the senior ranking person in this particular experience: 10 days' pay.

The woman, the junior rank, was docked seven days' pay. She was convicted, if that is what tribunals do. Certainly they determined that she had lied about it when both of them said it had not happened and then admitted that it did. She was convicted and dismissed from the forces.

Maybe there is an explanation for that that makes some sense. At face value I think it is a very powerful question that the man gets to keep the job, ten days' pay, is not demoted in any way, and the woman loses her job. To me, it does not seem to be fair or to reflect particularly well upon the RCMP. I do not know what the structural problem is there. I believe that the Senate committee could do a review of that in a way that would be helpful to the RCMP, because it is not going to be a witch hunt. It is not a partisan committee. It can allow people — and we are seeing many of them now coming forward — to have their say and be heard on both sides. I think that would be a worthwhile thing to do.

Finally, I want to say that the committee has been running much better of late. With great trepidation I have to make one point. The chair of this committee has actually been nice to me for the last two weeks, and I want that to sustain. However, in her comments about a month ago she made a statement that I think she probably did not mean in the way she made it. However, I cannot leave it unanswered. She said, in reference to the committee before she took it under her leadership, "We will not first decide the conclusions and then write a report to fit some personal point of view."

In doing that, not only did she undermine and discredit a committee that I think has distinguished itself from the day that it was created, but think about the members on that committee who would never have countenanced that kind of activity. They would never have been silent if that had been occurring: Mike Forrestall, Laurier LaPierre, Michael Meighen, Pierre Claude Nolin, Joe Day, Norm Atkins, Willy Moore, Tommy Banks, Lucie Pépin, Hugh Segal, Roméo Dallaire, Dan Lang and many others. I want to say in closing that the one who has made much of that tremendous success possible is Colin Kenny. He is one of the finest chairs that has ever managed a committee in this Senate. He has accomplished more than most or any other committee I could imagine. It was some of the best experiences I have ever had, and I think it is fair to say that the public of Canada understands that.

When that statement was made about bias in reports, I know that the chair of this committee did not mean it in the way that she said it. I know she did not mean to undermine and cast aspersions on these fine, distinguished senators who would never have countenanced that kind of activity.

• (1620)

Rather than distinguishing this committee as being better than its efforts in the past, I would say we should all work to sustain and aspire to the great success and the model that committee has been for as long as it has been in existence. Should we do that, it will remain a great committee and one of the best committees this Senate will have.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Further debate? Are honourable senators ready for the question?

Hon. Senators: Question.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It has been moved by the Honourable Senator Wallin, seconded by the Honourable Senator Lang, that the fourth report interim of the —

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I am sorry. I was taken away with the fine speech that has just been given, and I had intended to ask for the adjournment of the debate on this matter.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Day, debate adjourned.)

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

BUDGET AND AUTHORIZATION TO ENGAGE SERVICE AND TRAVEL—STUDY ON MANAGEMENT OF GREY SEAL POPULATION OFF CANADA'S EAST COAST—FIFTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE ADOPTED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the fifth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (*budget—study on the management of the grey seal population off Canada's East Coast—power to hire staff and to travel*), presented in the Senate on February 16, 2012.

Hon. Fabian Manning moved the adoption of the report.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to and report adopted.)

POVERTY

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Robichaud, P.C., calling the attention of the Senate to the issue of poverty in Canada — an issue that is always current and continues to have devastating effects.

Hon. Art Eggleton: Honourable senators, I first want to recognize and thank Senator Robichaud for putting this inquiry on the Order Paper. In the preamble here, he says the issue of poverty in Canada is “an issue that is always current and continues to have devastating effects.” How true that is.

Honourable senators, it was just a little over two years ago that the Senate unanimously adopted the report entitled *In From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*. This report was the product of a two-year undertaking by a subcommittee of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. I chaired the subcommittee and Senator Hugh Segal was deputy chair.

Unfortunately, the conditions we found at that time still exist today. We found then, as we do today, that a staggering one in ten Canadians lives in poverty. That is 3.4 million people, the equivalent of every man, woman and child in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan combined. For these people, our fellow citizens, every day is a battle with insufficient income, unaffordable housing, inadequate clothing and unsatisfactory nutrition. Just struggling to get by, these families cannot even dream about getting ahead. One witness who experienced poverty expressed it this way: “Poverty steals from your soul, leaving with you little or no hope. It robs of you of all that can be good in life. It leaves you isolated, lonely and hungry. Every day is a struggle.”

What is also disturbing is that approximately one in four of these people are our children, a statistic that is all the more deplorable given Parliament’s commitment back in 1989 to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. Instead, we have hardly made a dent with double-digit rates of child poverty in most provinces.

We also noted that our society is increasingly becoming more unequal. Statistics Canada has reported that from 1980 to 2005, the income of the richest one fifth of Canadians grew 16.4 per cent, while the poorest fifth declined 20.6 per cent. At the end of 2009, just 4 per cent of Canadian households controlled 67 per cent of the total wealth in Canada. Recent studies by the OECD, the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives have provided similar information and raised concerns about the impact on our social fabric, on our social cohesion.

Last year, while many Canadians were still feeling the effects of the recession, the executive pay of the CEOs of Canada’s largest companies was going up some 13 per cent. This widening gap between the rich and the poor — or the rich and the rest — is a looming crisis.

I think we all understand, honourable senators, the moral arguments against poverty and inequality: the jarring reality of suffering and want in this land of plenty, this rich country; the unacceptable toll in terms of the lives diminished, dreams deferred or potential denied.

What does not seem to register with many people is the economic cost of poverty, how it costs each and every one of us, not just the poor, forcing up our tax bills, depressing the economy, increasing health care bills and breeding alienation and crime.

An Ontario study that was guided by economists and policy experts such as Don Drummond, Judith Maxwell and James Milway estimates that poverty costs this country about \$7.5 billion every year in health care costs alone. The poorest quarter of Canadians costs us twice as much on health care as the richest quarter. Between \$8 million and \$13 million is lost productivity. All told, these people set poverty’s bill between \$24 billion and \$30 billion annually.

Here is another economic argument. A report by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce puts the looming demographic challenge in stark terms. As our population ages and the growth in the working age population slows, we are going to face significant labour shortages. In its report, the Chamber of Commerce said that in order to address the coming shortages in our labour supply, we need to tap into the underutilized segments of our society. They mentioned older people, Aboriginals, the disabled, new immigrants, especially single young men who were particularly hard hit by the recession.

Those are the very groups, honourable senators, along with lone parents, largely lone mothers, that our study found to be the most vulnerable to poverty. It turns out the very same groups that are languishing in poverty are the very ones that the Chamber of Commerce says will need to fill the jobs and pay the taxes in the future.

Here we have the intersection of two of the greatest challenges facing our society: the ongoing economic cost of poverty and the demographic time bomb of aging. The good news and the tremendous opportunity is that we can address both at the same time. Give more people a way out of poverty and we will help fill the jobs we need filled; give more people a way out of poverty and we will save the billions of dollars that poverty is costing each and every one of us.

Our committee also found that decades of social policy-making by all levels of government, well-meaning as it may have been, has resulted in two equally devastating results. First, even when all the programs are working as they should, the resulting income is often only enough to simply maintain them in poverty. Second, at their worst, existing policies and programs actually entrap people in poverty, creating unintended but nonetheless perverse effects that make it almost impossible to escape the reliance on income security programs or homeless shelters.

As Senator David Croll put it in his landmark committee report almost 40 years ago, he said:

We are pouring billions of dollars every year into a social welfare system that merely treats the symptoms of poverty but leaves the disease itself untouched.

However, there are some good signs. During our work, we found examples of promising practices and programs, largely community-based, that actually do work, that do lift people out of poverty and homelessness, and we identify and celebrate these initiatives in our report. Sadly, these examples are pockets of promise in an otherwise dysfunctional system that must be overhauled.

Our committee studied the whole range of income security programs, from tax breaks to social assistance and Employment Insurance to Old Age Security. We made a number of specific recommendations, 74 in all, for improvement. You will be happy to know that I will not go through all of them today, but they are available in the report for your perusal and reminder.

• (1630)

The bottom line is that no Canadian should live below the poverty line. We need a national antipoverty strategy from our federal and provincial governments. The National Council on Welfare, interestingly, a federally appointed organization, produced a report last fall called *The Dollars and Sense of Solving Poverty*. The council said that it would take \$12 billion annually to bring Canadians up to and over the poverty line. Compare that to the cost of poverty I mentioned earlier of \$24 to \$30 billion a year, and you can see why the council used the word “sense” instead of “cents” in the title of the report.

Let me turn briefly to housing and homelessness. I think all of us understand intuitively the importance of having decent shelter. A home anchors a person and a family. It provides the foundation for higher educational attainment and leads to greater stability in the workplace. Health experts also tell us that adequate housing is a key determinant of health and long-term health outcomes. Today in Canada, 4 million people are struggling to find affordable housing. By “affordable,” I am using CMHC’s standard rule of thumb of about 30 per cent of income going to housing that is adequate and in suitable condition.

In addressing the issue of homelessness, it is also not just about doing the morally right thing; it is also about dollars and cents. The fact is that it is more expensive for us to leave someone on the street than to provide them with decent housing and support services. Former Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach said just a year ago that the average homeless person costs society roughly \$100,000 a year, including health costs. These people are in and out of shelters and in and out of the judicial system and jails, et cetera. He said it was \$100,000, and some have said it is even more. The annual cost per person, he pointed out, drops to about \$35,000 annually if that person is given a long-term home and supports.

Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point*, wrote an article in *The New Yorker* magazine about a man known as Million-Dollar Murray. He is a man who lived on the streets, in jails, in hospital emergency rooms and hospitals. He suffered from addictions and, in the end, he died on the street. The million dollars refers to the cost to the taxpayers. How much better and cheaper it would have been to help him overcome these problems.

Honourable senators, we need to do a better job on both housing and homelessness, and it is time the federal and provincial governments finally come to grips with this issue and develop a national housing strategy.

Colleagues, how do we get movement on these issues? To get movement on these issues, we need will — political will. Most provinces are now adopting antipoverty plans. We need them to put this on the agenda at the federal-provincial-territorial

meetings to get the federal government involved as well. All levels of government need to work on this. We also need to increase public awareness and support and understanding about the costs that they all have to absorb, whether they are poor or not.

In conclusion, underlying our report is a simple common-sense premise: that social programs should lift people out of poverty, not keep them there, and that it is time to give people the tools they need so they can lift themselves into a better life. Poverty is not benign; it affects us all and it costs us all. We spend a lot of money and do not get the results we should. While in any change of system there are transitional costs, I firmly believe that, overall, we do not need to spend more money, but we do need to spend smarter, more efficiently and effectively.

In today’s global economy, with the looming demographic challenge of an aging society leading to a shrinking workforce, the importance of creating those opportunities, of unleashing the creative contribution of those trapped in poverty, is more important than ever. In a very real sense, the future level of our prosperity, I believe, depends on addressing the current level of our poverty. Simply put, I do not think we can afford poverty anymore.

(On motion of Senator Segal, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

ORDERS OF REFERENCE OF SENATE COMMITTEES

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONCLUDED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Comeau, calling the attention of the Senate to the content of committee orders of reference.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, I would like to begin by congratulating Senator Comeau once again. His inquiry raises a subject that is at the very heart of our role as parliamentarians.

I am sure we all agree that committees are the heart and perhaps even the very soul of the Senate. Like Senator Comeau, I have been here for some time, I have participated in the work of several committees, I have chaired committees and subcommittees, and I have come to understand just how precious the work of our committees is, not just to us, but to Parliament and the nation.

It is therefore vital that we fulfill our role as mindful guardians of what matters most in the traditions of the Senate and Parliament of Canada.

[English]

There is a long-standing problem, and Senator Comeau addressed it. He addressed it rather more nicely than I would. I would say it is even more acute than he would. The problem is, in my view, the way in which we handle orders of reference and budgetary decisions related to those orders of reference for committees.

First, the Senate is asked to approve an order of reference. That being done, the committee goes to the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, and specifically to the subcommittee that Senator Comeau chairs, the one on committee budgets and travel, and presents its budget. However, as Senator Comeau said, and I will quote him here:

In my view, it is not for our committee to question the parameters of an order of reference that the Senate has already adopted;

That has been the underlying principle and tradition in this place, which means that it is the Senate itself that should take responsibility for the orders of reference that it authorizes, and we, most times, do not do that. Partly we do not do it because we respect our committees. When a committee comes to us and says, "We want to study X," we tend to say, "Go right ahead because we know you are a serious group of people, and we will authorize you to do the study."

However, sometimes those orders of reference are so broad that we are authorizing committees to do almost anything. I remember some years ago when our former colleague Senator Banks was Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, he produced an order of reference that was so broad that I went to him and said, "You could do anything with this except travel to Mars." He beamed at me and said "Exactly." That was exactly what he wanted. He wanted an order of reference so broad that the committee could then deem itself to be authorized to do most anything that it felt like doing.

Senator Banks was a superb chair of that committee, in my view, and that committee did, under his leadership, as it continues to do, excellent and important work. All our committees do important work. That is not the issue. The issue is that when we give these authorizations, we are signing blank cheques for all intents and purposes. We do not exercise the function that parliamentarians are supposed to exercise, which is to know what they are doing and to know what they are authorizing in terms of the expenditure of public money. We therefore ask the Internal Economy Committee to do the impossible job of trying to adjudicate between all these different, important, valid claims, all authorized by the Senate.

• (1640)

We know there are oddities in the way our rules are set up; there are difficulties. However, it seems to me that we, as parliamentarians, could, without changing a single rule, simply change our practices. We could, whenever a committee comes before us with an order of reference, stand up and ask questions. We could, indeed, expect that before we even get to ask questions, the committee chair — or deputy chair, depending on who is present — give a fairly detailed explanation of what is planned. We could require, by refusing to adopt excessively broad orders of reference, that orders of reference be specific. We are not just going to study all matters relating to energy and the environment generally, valid though that may be as a field of study. We are going to say we will look at whatever it is that the Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources is actually going to be looking at. We could provide dates. We could provide to the Senate outlines of whom the committee plans to hear, where it

plans to travel, what the core issues are it plans to explore and what it expects to be able to report, not in terms of the conclusions but in terms of the areas that it expects to be able to report upon.

I mentioned Energy, but we all know what I said applies to all kinds of committees. Riffing through orders of reference more recently, I found one from the Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, an excellent committee that does very important work representing people who desperately need representation.

My goodness, we authorized them to:

Examine and report on the federal government's constitutional, treaty, political and legal responsibilities to First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples and on other matters generally relating to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

What does that mean? We do not know. I repeat: Aboriginal peoples are a vital field of study, but before we, as 105 parliamentarians, authorize the committee to go off and do anything and everything, we need to require that it be specific. We do not do that, and in not doing it, truly, we fail, in my view, in our constitutional duty.

Most of us will recall hearing our former colleague Lowell Murray, a man who had forgotten more than most of us will ever know about Parliament and about public finances. He used to complain that the House of Commons has:

... allowed their most vital power, the power of the purse, to become a dead letter, their supply and estimates process an empty ritual.

We know that is true. We know that if a House of Commons committee does not look at estimates, they just are deemed to be adopted. That is true under the present government, and it has been true under preceding ones.

There was a great day under a Liberal government not that long ago when, in the space of half an hour, they passed \$50 billion worth of estimates, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Unanimous consent was given for this. That is hardly being an effective guardian of the public purse.

We cannot tell the House of Commons what to do, but we can look after our own house, and we can see to it that we finally do what we should do, and that is examine what we are authorizing and how we are authorizing those precious taxpayers' dollars to be spent.

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau: Would Senator Fraser entertain a question?

Senator Fraser: With some trepidation.

Senator Comeau: I do want to thank Senator Fraser for having given the extra comments that I had not during my own speech. She went into much more detail, but I think I can understand why.

Listening to her comments, she mentioned the House of Commons and how different the House of Commons is from the Senate. In the House of Commons, they have a kind of general order of reference. They do not need to seek the reference from their chamber. In other words, they can just go at it and study what they wish to study at any one time.

On the Senate side, however, the senators are interested in what the committees are doing. That is why an order of reference has to be sought from this chamber. With that in mind, senators do want to know what their committees are doing.

I think what the honourable senator has brought up is extremely important. The kinds of questions she has suggested would add so much more to what we are doing and would continue to increase the value of our committees. If we are aware of what our committees are doing, we will follow them much more closely. This is one of the areas that have made our committees so much more powerful, along with the fact that we do not have to worry about an election in three years, I presume.

Would Senator Fraser have other suggestions that, in the course of her comments, she may have forgotten to mention? Are there other factors that contribute to why our committees are so much better?

Senator Fraser: Definitely our committees are so much better. Again last week, when the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs was sitting, several witnesses I chatted with after they had appeared said, as we have all heard so many say, "You know, I have appeared before committees in the House of Commons and I have appeared before committees here, and it is like night and day. It is so much better here. You people do serious work, and you are not consumed by partisan point-scoring."

The witnesses — and I believe the public — genuinely appreciate that. It is true that we all care deeply about the work of our committees. That is one of the distinguishing features of the Senate.

I also believe that one reason we have been able to do better work relates to the nature of this place as it has evolved over the years. Of course that may change, but at the moment I think one of the advantages we have in that respect is that we do not have to get elected, we do not have to worry about partisan point-scoring and we know we will be living together for a long time. It is just a good idea to be serious as you go about things and not fall into endless partisan baiting.

I do not know that I have any more specific recommendations to make. I certainly am not familiar to the extent that Senator Comeau is with the way the House of Commons' rules work. He served with distinction there for some time before he came to serve with distinction here, and I have not had that honour. I do not think I would do it very well, either.

I respect them. I know that I could not do the work that MPs do, but I think in this field we can do better work, and, although we do very good work now, we can do even better work. If more recommendations were to come forward from the Internal

Economy Committee about the specifics, the practicalities of how we get at it, I would be more than interested to see them. I would encourage anyone to participate in that work if so invited.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Further debate?

Senator Comeau: I do want to comment briefly. I know this is supposed to be a question, but I will make it in the form of a comment. I am glad the honourable senator brought up the difference between what this chamber does and what the House of Commons does.

I agree with her that the members in the House of Commons do extremely valuable work. They work hard in a sometimes extremely difficult and partisan atmosphere. Every once in a while, you will see that in our committees in the Senate, but, for the most part, a great deal of the work is done in a non-partisan atmosphere when we get into the studies.

• (1650)

One of the great advantages of the Senate and one of the finest roles we have as senators is to produce reports that are of a non-partisan, collegial nature. As I am looking across at Senator Day, I want to congratulate him on the work he does on the Finance Committee and on the extremely serious way that the Finance Committee approaches things. This is quite often quite opposite to what the other place does. I think we have to be very appreciative of the way our committees can produce, and they do produce.

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: I know time is up, but I wonder if we could have five minutes.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Senator Fraser, are you asking for five more minutes?

Senator Fraser: Yes.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Honourable senators, is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Yes.

Senator Stewart Olsen: I had been going to speak to this debate because I think it is extremely important, but both of you have been eloquent on the same points that I would make. Being new and sitting on the Internal Economy Committee, I would welcome some brief notes from Senator Fraser on how she thinks Internal Economy should proceed to make those changes that I feel are extremely important and such good points. If she could forward them to the chair of Internal Economy, I would be most appreciative.

Senator Fraser: I thank the honourable senator for that expression of confidence. I have never served on Internal Economy. It is one of the committees I have never served on. I have been one of the gaggle of committee chairs who appear before Internal Economy then go away and complain because they did not get enough money and someone else got more.

I will think about that, and I would urge all of us to think about it because we all want to do this thing properly.

Senator Stewart Olsen: Thank you.

The Hon. the Speaker: If no other honourable senator wishes to speak, this inquiry shall be deemed to have been debated.

(Debate concluded.)

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOMBER COMMAND DURING WORLD WAR II

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Meighen, calling the attention of the Senate to the unconscionable delay, despite the resolution of this Chamber passed unanimously on June 18, 2008, of the awarding of an appropriate theatre decoration for the brave Canadian flyers and crew who served in Bomber Command during World War II, without whose efforts, courage and sacrifice the war and its destruction would have continued for many more years.

Hon. Hugh Segal: Honourable senators, I rise to speak to former Senator Meighen's inquiry on the unconscionable delay in the awarding of an appropriate recognition to the brave Canadians who served in World War II as part of Bomber Command. The greatest tribute I can pay to Senator Meighen, having not been here when tributes were paid on the day of his resignation, is to continue with others to battle to overturn this horrific injustice.

This chamber spoke with one voice in the unanimous resolution on June 18, 2008. I have no evidence whatsoever to offer this chamber that anyone at Rideau Hall, in the Chancellery of Honours, within the Department of National Defence, or within the Department of Veterans Affairs, or Heritage, or the Privy Council Office of Canada, took the slightest bit of notice of the resolution we passed unanimously in this place on this issue.

In the meantime, these brave airmen, who sustained more casualties in the vital bombing raids over Nazi Germany than Canadians faced in any other theatre of war in World War II, die off without the recognition they deserve. How cruel are the bureaucrats, the pettifogging honours committee members, and the indolent staff in all of these departments, including Rideau Hall, to let this travesty continue. Do they know how courageous these young Canadians had to be? Do they care that the danger was so great that, of the 17,100 Canadians who served in Bomber Command, 9,980 of our fellow Canadians — or 56 per cent — were lost in that battle? Obviously, these foot-dragging civil servants do not give a damn.

This week, I shall file a series of written questions seeking the names, meetings, dates, and participants of committees within the bureaucracy that have delayed, fiddled, hypothecated and dithered, while Canadians many years their senior have died —

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Segal: Canadians who showed more courage and patriotism and love of country in a few hours over Europe, on many, many occasions, than these civil servants could ever understand.

I want to congratulate Ministers MacKay and Baird and Senators Moore and LeBreton, who have all spoken out in favour of this award and have worked extremely hard to bring it about. Why, then, has nothing happened? Who and what is so deeply entangling and restraining that even senior ministers of the Crown, good and honest men and women, carry no sway on this issue? What honours process or committee is so immune to public decency and fairness that it can actively keep the right thing from happening for so long? What transgression did these brave Canadian pilots and crew commit when they brought the war to Hitler's Germany long before a Western front could be opened, by Canadians and others, on the beaches of Sicily and Normandy and long after Nazi bombers attacked civilian populations in Europe and during the Blitz over London?

Honourable senators, in this jubilee year, throughout her 16 realms, we honour the service of a Queen who, as a young woman and princess living through the Blitz in London, worked in the motor pool repairing ambulances and other vehicles vital to saving civilian lives attacked every night under enemy bombing. That spirit of service, duty, and loyalty to her people has been our Queen's hallmark ever since. This jubilee year is the perfect opportunity to right a wrong and award the Canadians of Bomber Command the decoration their selfless service, courage, and sacrifice so richly deserve.

I know that the Leader of the Government in the Senate has tried to be very helpful on this file, and I am grateful for that. I know there is bipartisan support for this proposition, which is why the resolution passed unanimously in 2008. There are, I am sure, as we speak, people, in ministers', MPs' and senators' offices who are working extremely hard, on all sides of the house, to try to make this happen. This makes the lack of progress to date even more frustrating.

Honourable senators, I invite others in the chamber to join in this debate over the coming weeks. Hopefully, if we persist and engage, the devils of delay, dither, obfuscation and betrayal might be chased away by the angels of decency, respect, recognition and gratitude before it is too late. We owe no less to the brave Canadian pilots and crews who shortened the war, helped save millions of lives and were so vital to the preservation of civilization itself against fascist tyranny. Lest we forget, indeed.

The Hon. the Speaker: Would Senator Segal take a question?

Senator Segal: I would be delighted.

Hon. Percy E. Downe: The honourable senator did a very good job, as always, in outlining the issue and, in this case, the frustration we all feel on this issue. Could he tell us what the problem is? What committee has to approve this? Surely it is not a line department of the government. It would be some honours committee. Would it be Rideau Hall or the Government of Canada? Can they strike a particular tribute in this area? I am wondering what the honourable senator's investigation has found to date.

Senator Segal: The bad news and the good news, senator, is that the answer to all of your questions is yes, all of the possibilities. I have followed it from department to department. I have followed it to the Privy Council Office. I have followed it to the chancery. I have asked the questions that suggest themselves — that is, honours committees meeting or not meeting; honours policies, under review or otherwise — but the response is always “Not yet. There is an issue. It is being addressed.” Then it dies. The problem with that is that, while the prospect dies, more and more of the pilots who have been unrecognized for this specific particular sacrifice and bravery also die.

• (1700)

We had special additions to decorations made for Dieppe. We had special editions for decorations made for North Africa, a theatre of battle. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. We are merely saying that the Bomber Command proposition, those hundreds of flights that had to take place so as to sustain the war effort, be recognized as the particular place where men and crews, pilots and navigators and weapons officers, did their best for their country at huge odds. This is all we are asking for. That is all the survivors and their families are asking for.

As to why it is still held up, I wish I could give my honourable friend from Prince Edward Island a clear and precise answer. I am unable to do so because I just do not know.

Senator Downe: I thank the honourable senator for that answer. He raised the Dieppe Bar which, as he indicated, was awarded years after the event. In fact, my late father-in-law received it years after.

I would assume that this would be a similar process. The question is this: Does the honourable senator know how that Dieppe Bar was awarded decades after the war?

Senator Segal: I am led to believe that the process is that there is an interdepartmental honours committee that considers these issues. They try to do so in a fashion that is completely non-partisan and even-handed. They look at the history and get historical advice from the Department of National Defence.

There used to be a rule in place that five years was the limit between when things transpire and when they might be recognized. Clearly, that has not always been applied. It is generally applied, but not universally applied. The point that the honourable senator makes is well taken. There is no reason, in terms of that rule having existed, not to make the recognition appropriate in this case and make it as quickly as possible.

Senator Downe: It sounds like the honour system is run by CSIS. I wish the honourable senator good luck.

Senator Segal: I would settle for this being managed by CSIS — we would be doing darned better on this — than by an interdepartmental committee of faceless public servants who do not appear, as far as I can tell, to be accountable to any political authority who would ask the questions, “Why so long? Why is it

taking so long? How much longer do we have to wait?” There does not appear to be any direct accountability that I can discern within the structures of the machinery of government at the present time.

Hon. Michael Duffy: Honourable Senator Segal, I wonder if in the dark recesses of your mind you might consider the fact that Bomber Command was the subject of a very biased and unfair documentary. Is it some of the hangover of that unfair depiction of the bravery of these mostly young men that is, perhaps, causing the bureaucrats to overlook the true valour that is at play here?

Senator Segal: I remember parts of that controversy, honourable senator. I want to give credit to Senator Day, who was working as chair of a committee that sought to deal with the controversy at the time. To his credit, they worked out, I think, an appropriate balance, with the cooperation of our friends at the Canadian War Museum, which not only did not run away from the controversy that had existed at the time and in the post-war years but also put it in the right perspective, namely, by paying tribute to the bravery and courage of the young Canadians who had faced those difficult assignments on those awful nights.

One reads, for example, that in the endless negotiation between Stalin and Churchill to keep the Russians onside, when they were angry about no western front being launched, the one thing that Mr. Churchill could say is that Bomber Command is bringing the war to the enemy in a fashion that no one yet had done on either side, right to their heartland. That was a critical bridge, keeping the Russians onside with the Allied efforts to keep fascist tyranny from destroying the world.

The controversy may have been an issue, but I would argue that the work done by Senator Day and by others on his committee, in a completely non-partisan way, moved that issue to the side. It would be a flimsy excuse and a flimsy effort to obfuscate the truth, which is that they simply seem unable to understand, as the honourable senator's question belies, the urgency of this issue for the survivors of this important aspect of the fight for freedom.

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, I wish to thank the Honourable Senator Segal for his support and fine rendition of the facts in relation to this particular issue. Perhaps I can give honourable senators an historical perspective.

We dealt with this issue in the Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence. Senator Norm Atkins, whose father had fought in the First World War at Vimy Ridge, was the deputy chair of the committee and very committed to making sure there was proper recognition.

The documentary that came out in relation to this matter caused a great deal of disappointment among many people in Canada. We worked hard to try to get some trailers on it that might have softened it a bit. However, we were not very successful in that regard.

Following that, there was a display at the Canadian War Museum. That display reflected the same bias against what Bomber Command had done. It was extremely disappointing. We had public hearings on this and we were successful in having that

display changed as a result of the work that honourable senators did. It was such a strong controversy that there were a number of people within the war museum who resigned as a result, so one knows how strong the feelings were on this particular matter. It is important for us to understand all of that background.

Honourable senators, there is another piece to this. There are quite a few Canadians who joined the British air force and participated in Bomber Command under the British command. It was later in the war that Bomber Command Canada had its own group. There were still many Canadians flying under the RAF banner. That is another complication.

My understanding is that the chancery has looked at this. However, I have never been able to see their recommendation, which would go to our executive. Chancery makes no decisions, they make recommendations. The ultimate decision is that of the executive of government. I think we should continue to work on this and try to get the facts that Senator Segal has indicated he will pursue. I would like to pursue it further and refresh my memory. It has been three or four years since I have had an opportunity to work on this matter. I had hoped that we had achieved something by making that significant stand at the Canadian War Museum, but it is clear that there are still some biases. I suspect very much that it is bias that is causing some problems here.

Time is running out, because many of the participants in Bomber Command are not likely, life expectancy being what it is, to be here that much longer. This is critical and it has been so for some time.

With your permission, honourable senators, I would like to adjourn this matter to have an opportunity to research further for the balance of my time.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: It has been moved by Honourable Senator Day, seconded by Honourable Senator Downe, that further debate in this matter be adjourned by Honourable Senator Day for the balance of his time until the next sitting of the Senate.

Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(On motion of Senator Day, debate adjourned.)

• (1710)

INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN FOUNDATIONS IN CANADA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Nicole Eaton rose pursuant to notice of February 2, 2012:

That she will call the attention of the Senate to the interference of foreign foundations in Canada's domestic affairs and their abuse of Canada's existing Revenue Canada Charitable status.

[Senator Day]

She said: Honourable senators, I rise today to open an inquiry that will reveal astounding information. It surprised me and I hope it will surprise you. It will make your blood boil and, hopefully, it will prompt us all to action.

There is political manipulation. There is influence peddling. There are millions of dollars crossing borders masquerading as charitable foundations into bank accounts of sometimes phantom charities that do nothing more than act as a fiscal clearing house. They dole out money to other charities without disclosing what the money is for. This inquiry is about how billionaire foreign foundations have quietly moved into Canada and, under the guise of charitable deeds, are trying to define our domestic policies.

[Translation]

It is about organizations that are lining their own pockets by getting involved in whatever causes are the latest trend.

[English]

It is about has-been and wannabe movie stars trying to defibrillate their flatlined careers. It is about anything to undermine the credibility of the Canadian brand — our Canadian identity in Canada and around the world. However, do the charitable and non-governmental organizations that accept enormous amounts of money really represent the interests of Canada, or do they pander to the interests of their foreign masters? Is it really about the environment, or is it about something much bigger and much more profitable? It is about how they use the majority of their resources for political activities and lobbying and about entities that are set up as charitable organizations but, in fact, do not even have an office in Canada, just a post office box. Cleverly masked as grassroots movements, these interests are audaciously treading on our domestic affairs and on Canadian sovereignty, all under the radar.

As Vivian Krause, a West Coast citizen activist and blogger, put it:

One thing is sure: when 36 organizations are all funded by a common, foreign source, their multi-million dollar campaign — with paid, full-time staff, expensive billboards and state-of-the-art web-sites — is anything but a grassroots operation.

[Translation]

This inquiry is about masters of manipulation who are hiding behind charitable organizations to manipulate our policies to their own advantage.

[English]

If we follow the money trail of financial contributions to Canadian charities and NGOs, we will certainly understand why foreign foundations are spending so much money in Canada. Unfortunately, the answers are often hidden behind layers of clever lawyers and accountants working for privately endowed foundations structured to avoid scrutiny. According to preliminary calculations conducted by Vivian Krause, U.S. foundations have poured at least \$300 million into the

environmental movement in Canada since 2000 — \$300 million. The Tides Foundation of California injected at least \$6 million into 36 Canadian organizations. The David Suzuki Foundation has been paid at least \$10 million by American foundations over the past decade. The Hewlett Foundation based in California has channeled \$13.6 million to Tides Canada between 2002 and 2007. The Geneva-based Oak Foundation, set up by British billionaire Alan Parker, has divided almost \$2.6 million among six groups for campaigns against the tar sands since 2007. Those are only to name a few.

Key Canadian organizations supported by international foundations with the intent of influencing public opinion and policy direction have acquired Canada Revenue Agency charitable status, and they issue tax receipts, even though much of their activity could be deemed as highly political. Many are operating as lobbyists without following any of our rules. Patrick Moore, formerly with Greenpeace Canada, points out that it is not a charitable act to interfere in the sovereignty of a country.

For example, a major study released by the University of Calgary on December 15, 2011, concluded that if pipeline capacity existed to take full advantage of the oil sands, Canada's economy would see a boost of \$131 billion between 2016 and 2030. The number of high-paying jobs at risk is staggering. The Keystone project alone is projected to generate 140,000 Canadian jobs and \$600 billion in economic activity over the next 25 years.

[Translation]

There has been a great deal of talk about the oil sands in general as well as the Keystone project and the Northern Gateway pipeline. However, we must not forget that these organizations have their sights set on other sectors of Canada's domestic affairs.

[English]

There are the boreal forests, the seal hunt, salmon farming, gas fracturing and the general management of our land and natural resources. A year ago, Vivian Krause documented how the U.S.-based Packard Foundation has poured millions into a campaign against B.C. salmon to the benefit of Alaska's ranched salmon. The Packard Foundation, from Seattle, which refers to itself as "protecting the northwest" on its website, granted \$68 million to support the Marine Stewardship Council and \$17 million to reform the aquaculture industry by de-marketing farmed fish, especially B.C. salmon. De-marketing is reducing or shifting the demand. This tactic has been used against Canadian forest products and, more recently, Alberta oil, but the Canadian export that has been hardest hit is farmed salmon.

What is the result? Since 2003, the ex-vessel value of Alaskan salmon has more than tripled to \$500 million at the expense of B.C. salmon. The Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations credited the Packard Foundation with "playing a big part in boosting our markets." On its website, the association identifies itself as "the largest and most politically active trade association of commercial fishermen on the [U.S.] west coast."

[Translation]

In its 2010 annual report, the Humane Society of the United States boasted that it is:

... methodically closing down markets for sealskins and diminishing the commercial value of the pelts, making the whole enterprise for the sealers and the government of Canada a losing proposition.

Honourable senators, that is a direct quote.

[English]

This is the same group that funded a photo opportunity for Paul McCartney and Heather Mills on the ice with baby seals to pressure our government into banning the harp seal hunt — spectacle advocacy at its finest. The seal hunt generates more than \$15 million in revenue for Newfoundland and Labrador. It is estimated that between 5,000 and 6,000 people derive at least some part of their income from sealing. Do not forget, honourable senators, seal meat is an important staple in the Inuit diet.

The Brainerd Foundation, from Seattle, has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to stop tankers from operating on the B.C. coast and to stop development in B.C. and Yukon. On their website, they wanted to grow public opposition to counter the Enbridge pipeline construction and the risk that increased tanker traffic would entail.

The Pew Charitable Trusts, from Philadelphia, transferred millions to Canadian charities to "protect the boreal forest." Yet, a mere \$125,000 was granted to the fight against the pine beetle that has devastated billions of trees in British Columbia and Alberta and is a huge threat to the very boreal forests that Pew is purporting to protect. What is it they are really protecting?

Prime Minister Harper has repeatedly questioned why these groups are so intent on turning Canada into one huge national park. Is it a coincidence that they are so fixated on the very sectors that strengthen the Canadian economy, or could it be as simple as protectionism of markets and trade interests? Could it be that while America and Europe falter, Canada is emerging as a strong economic and social power?

• (1720)

Brian Lee Crowley, managing director of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute and author of *The Canadian Century: Moving out of America's Shadow*, posits that the 21st century will belong to Canada. All the signs are there. Canada is rich in the quality of our citizens, the beauty of our landscapes and in our natural resources. We have the four *F*s in abundance: food, fuel, fertilizer and forestry.

We are a nation that values human rights, gender equality, protection of minorities and freedom of choice. Our leaders and decision-makers are sought after for their advice and expertise. Our economy is the strongest of the G7 countries. *Forbes* magazine ranked Canada the number one country in which to conduct business. Internationally we have also accomplished much toward making the world, including Canada, a better place.

Our Canadian identity is strong. In Canada, a quiet patriotism has blossomed. We saw this during the 2010 Olympics when for the first time Canadians unabashedly put our national pride on display for the world to see.

Three recent columns confirmed Canada's growing influence. In his January 9, 2012 column in the *Ottawa Citizen*, Matthew Fisher documented how Canada is playing a bigger role on the world stage.

British writer, journalist and broadcaster James Delingpole, in his January 10, 2012 article, lauds Canada, stating:

... of all the great Western nations Canada is probably the only one left standing up for the values that made the West great.

Most recently, in his January 30 article in the *National Post*, Jack Granatstein, respected historian and senior research fellow of the Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute, concluded that:

Harper's foreign policies have made Canada a world player.

Yet, foreign interests have been somewhat successful in their objectives. Using relatively minor single-issue non-governmental groups, they have launched very expensive, professionally designed so-called public education programs.

Take the oil sands. We allowed international interests to frame our oil sands industry with myths, misinformation and catchy slogans like "tar sands" and "dirty oil."

[Translation]

We can learn from that experience and we can strike back. We need to make it clear that they cannot come here to our country and incite Canadians to turn against us, or even worse, pay agitators to come here and provoke demonstrations and protests against our own country.

[English]

This is not a partisan issue, nor is it a regional one. It is certainly not an environmental issue. This is a Canadian issue; a patriotic issue. This is about our sovereignty and economic well-being.

We need to point out some inconvenient truths of our own: truths like the atrocious human rights records of OPEC nations where women are not allowed to vote or even drive, where gays are persecuted and sentenced to death, and where loathsome tyrants rule over oppressed, poverty-stricken populations.

Yet, the very same foundations that are sinking billions into anti-Canadian initiatives are surprisingly silent on their own country's records. Former Canadian ambassador to Washington Derek Burney pointed out that the carbon footprint from the coal-fired U.S. energy industry is 64 times larger than that of the Alberta oil sands. Do we hear about that from Americans? No, we do not.

[Senator Eaton]

Just last week, Andrew Weaver, Canada Research Chair in Climate Modelling and Analysis at the University of Victoria and a lead author of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, concluded that the impact of burning all the economically viable proven reserve of the oil sands would be negligible and that burning up all the oil in areas currently being extracted would have even less impact. Not surprisingly, Weaver says that coal is significantly worse for the environment than oil sands.

Mysteriously, the American foundations casually shrug off their own records or any interference to their acceptance of conflict oil from countries like Iran, and even go so far as to promote boycotts of Canadian oil.

My advice to all those Hollywood has-beens who have been trying to restart their careers at the oil sands' expense should turn their self-righteousness on their coal-fired U.S. energy industry.

Honourable senators, over the coming weeks we will be gaining valuable insight into this issue. We will learn about our income tax policies, our legal framework, our Charter and about land use and natural resource management strategies. We will hear about harsh realities in OPEC countries and about how the Northern Gateway Review Panel has been hijacked by thousands of would-be interveners, many of whom do not even bother to show up to testify.

We will hear about the lessons learned from Keystone and the impact of all of this on our economy.

I am hoping this inquiry will raise the awareness of all Canadians to this troublesome manipulation of Canada's domestic affairs by foreign interests. I am also hoping that the research conducted in preparation for every segment of this inquiry will point to a natural second phase of solutions.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Joan Fraser: I believe Senator Eaton's time has expired, but I wonder if she would ask for a couple more minutes so I could put a question.

The Hon. the Speaker pro tempore: Is the honourable senator prepared to ask for more time?

Senator Eaton: May I have more time to take Senator Fraser's question?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Fraser: This is not going to the profound substance of the honourable senator's remarks. I will have to consider them very carefully and do some of my own research.

However, my attention was caught by the honourable senator's suggestion that by the invention of a catchy slogan, namely "tar sands," is a recent thing. I had wondered if she had checked that. Many years ago, when I was starting out as a financial and economic reporter, I worked for an editor who was a western business writer. I had never heard of it before. He told me about this extraordinary phenomenon called the tar sands. He told me

about Peter Pond and about the great wealth that lay there. In those days we did not know how to extract it, this is how long ago it was. However, he called it “tar sands.” I never heard the phrase “oil sands” until a comparatively few years ago and I wondered where she got the notion that this was a new catchy slogan devised by opponents.

Senator Eaton: I think it is new in the way it is used. Yes, “tar sands” is a very old definition of “oil sands,” because, as honourable senators know, it used to seep up and First Nations used it to seal their canoes. I think now in the way it is used, “tar” means dirty and black. I think that is why they are using it. They are using it in a very pejorative sense. If you notice, anyone who is against the oil sands development always refers to them as the “tar sands” as opposed to the “oil sands.” Tar is really something that comes from pine tar, I think, so it is a different substance.

Hon. Joseph A. Day: First, let me thank Senator Eaton for that well researched presentation. It was very interesting and I will look forward to reflecting on some of the points that she made. I just wanted to clarify the inquiry and her presentation so I understand it.

The honourable senator talked about the interference of foreign foundations in Canada. That would be like the National Rifle Association pouring money into Canada to help influence decisions here in Canada. This is foreign money that they bring into Canada, but the second aspect she talked about is the abuse of Revenue Canada’s charitable status. Is she talking about foreign foundations coming in and raising money as charities in Canada, and then using it in Canada?

Senator Eaton: No. What I am referring to is that foreign foundations very often set up a Canadian counterpart. They give their money to the Canadian counterpart with a direct goal in mind. The Canadian counterpart, which acts as a clearinghouse or infrastructure, then gives the money to local Canadian charities, and it is deemed to be Canadian money. It is like a feeder foundation; the American charity feeds its American counterpart set up in Canada that then sends out money to other Canadian foundations. Of course, if you are a Canadian charitable foundation, you can get a tax receipt.

• (1730)

I think the most important thing about charitable foundations is not the tax receipt so much as when a Canadian or any of us here sees that it is a charity, in quotes, or a foundation, we assume that it is doing good work. We do not question what they are doing.

Senator Day: The second part I understand. It is the first part I am unclear about. If a Canadian registered charity gives out a tax receipt, it is only good against income generated in Canada. Therefore, this money that a foreign foundation raises elsewhere, wherever it might be, and brings into Canada would not be able to take advantage of a tax receipt in any way, the way I see it, unless they are raising money here in Canada.

Senator Eaton: I think the honourable senator is asking a very technical question.

My understanding is that some Canadian charities have reciprocal agreements with the U.S. and vice versa; i.e., the Stratford Festival raises money in Chicago and provides a tax receipt to an American. It works for them.

However, say I am a foundation in the United States and I give to my foundation in Canada; it becomes Canadian money when I accept it. My Canadian foundation’s money is then streamed off to you, to you and to you. Because it has come from a Canadian registered foundation, it is Canadian money and a tax receipt is provided.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Further debate?

Hon. Grant Mitchell: Honourable senators, I want to ask a question, if I could.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: I am sorry, but the time is up, Senator Mitchell.

Senator Mitchell: I will take the adjournment, then.

(On motion of Senator Mitchell, debate adjourned.)

OVERSEAS TAX EVASION

INQUIRY—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Percy E. Downe rose pursuant to notice of February 7, 2012:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to:

- (a) the problem of Canadians evading taxes by hiding assets in overseas tax havens;
- (b) the harm this does to Canada, both in terms of lost revenue and its effect on those Canadians who obey the law and pay their fair share of taxes;
- (c) the pathetic efforts of the Canada Revenue Agency to discover, halt and deter overseas tax evasion, and how, in comparison to those similar agencies in other countries, CRA falls short;
- (d) the fact that this, plus recent scandals involving the CRA could lead one to conclude that there are serious problems at the Agency; and
- (e) concerns that this situation amounts to a lack of leadership on the part of the Government of Canada.

He said: Honourable senators, I too want to talk about the Canada Revenue Agency, but unlike Senator Eaton, I want to talk about money going outside the country; I want to talk about overseas tax evasion.

As you know, honourable senators, I have been following this issue for a number of years. The last time I spoke about it, a reporter asked me, “Are you aware if any of your colleagues in the Senate have overseas accounts?” I said, “No, but you may

want to check; maybe there are some rich journalists who have overseas accounts," as they are never disclosed because the names are not public.

In this case, I am talking about a bank in Liechtenstein where there was an inquiry as to how information was received. A bank employee stole information from the bank, went to his home country and then offered that information for sale. Strangely enough, the Government of Germany purchased that information from him, and then they sent that information out to other countries that had citizens on the list. In the case of this bank in Liechtenstein, there were 106 Canadians on that list who had secret, undisclosed accounts.

The problem is with the Canada Revenue Agency. According to their website, their mandate is "to administer tax, benefits, and related programs, and to ensure compliance on behalf of governments across Canada, thereby contributing to the ongoing economic and social well-being of Canadians."

Unfortunately, the weak efforts to hunt down overseas tax evaders are troubling indicators that the CRA has had difficulty in fulfilling its mandate, and on many occasions has failed.

Tax evasion within the boundaries of Canada is also a problem. Recently, the media has reported that there is an RCMP probe into alleged corruption among some CRA officials, and that probe has been widened to include officials at many CRA offices. Investigations have been ongoing since 2008 in response to allegations that federal auditors that help firms evade taxes in Canada have turned a blind eye to unreported income.

Three CRA auditors have been fired under suspicion of sharing a bank account worth nearly \$2 million with a business owner who has pled guilty to tax evasion. These investigations raise serious questions about the state and competence of the current management of the CRA and leads directly to my ongoing concern about the massive problems of overseas tax evasion.

As I indicated, in 2007 the Government of Canada received information from the Government of Germany. It was because of this lucky break that CRA had the list of these 106 tax cheats handed to them on a silver platter.

I have been doing what I can to follow this affair through access to information requests, written questions in the Senate and correspondence with various ministers over the years, and I must confess to being disappointed at what I have found. In contrast to what other countries have done — in the U.S.A. there were hearings on Capitol Hill, police raids in Germany, people charged all over the world — the response in Canada has been shocking, quite frankly, to the point where questions are being asked about the competence of CRA management.

In response to inquiries I made, the government admitted that the information they were handed showed the amounts in Canadian-held Liechtenstein bank accounts totalled over \$100 million, ranging from one account, which had the lowest amount of money, at \$500,000, to one account with over \$12 million. These are very rich Canadians.

When I first raised this issue, the federal government was full of promise and tough talk. In 2009, then revenue minister Jean-Pierre Blackburn said:

People realized that it's a question of time before we get them . . . I tell them 'We'll get you, we'll find you.'

Earlier in the year, he called tax evasion "a huge problem for this country" and vowed "if somebody owes us something, we have to get it."

Since 2007, however, the results have fallen short of the talk. Last year, the Canada Revenue Agency claimed to have only recovered \$6 million in back taxes, interest and penalties on the money hidden by Canadians in Liechtenstein. Given that the total amount of money hidden away was over \$100 million, and as I said, \$12 million in one account alone, this is a very small amount.

Amid the talk of interest and penalties, another fact becomes clear: not one penny has been assessed in fines. That is because not one charge has been laid. In the four years since this information has come to light, not one of these Canadians who hid their money abroad to avoid paying taxes in Canada has stood before a judge in Canada or overseas.

In stark contrast to Canada's response, several hundred citizens of the United Kingdom were facing prosecution in July of 2008, mere months after the existence of their hidden assets in Liechtenstein was made public. In the same short period, German tax authorities forced evaders with assets in Liechtenstein to pay over \$150 million.

Finally, since the scandal surfaced in 2008, no less than 20 countries have concluded tax information exchange agreements with Liechtenstein in an effort to keep tabs on their citizens' tax avoidance. The United States, the U.K., Australia, France and Germany have all signed agreements. Even countries such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Andorra and the Faroe Islands — a self-governing territory of Denmark consisting of 18 islands in the North Atlantic Sea, with a population of 50,000 — have signed tax information exchange agreements with Liechtenstein.

Guess who has yet to conclude any agreement? Canada. If all these other countries, big and small, can conclude a deal so quickly, what is taking Canada years to get this done? By comparison to even some of the world's smallest countries, Canada's response to the tax scandal can be described as slack at best. The question is why? Any ordinary resident of Canada who is found to not be declaring their income would be hounded by the Canada Revenue Agency.

• (1740)

Why the double standards for very rich Canadians with foreign bank accounts hidden in well-known tax havens? In fact, these tax cheats appear to have received special treatment from the CRA once it was uncovered they were stashing money in Liechtenstein. In response to one of my written questions, the CRA revealed that, as of June 2010, 20 of the 106 residents of Canada who had the accounts in Liechtenstein had availed themselves of the CRA Voluntary Disclosure Program, the VDP. The VDP allows

taxpayers to come forward and correct information or to disclose information they had not reported during previous dealings with the CRA, without penalty for prosecution.

Among other criteria for disclosure under the VDP to be valid, it must be voluntary. CRA's own definition of "voluntary" disqualifies disclosures where "the taxpayer was aware of, or had knowledge of an audit, investigation or other enforcement action set to be conducted by the CRA . . ."

Since the CRA also revealed that all 106 Canadians with accounts in Liechtenstein were subject to some level of compliance action, none of them should have been eligible for the voluntary disclosure program. In fact, the CRA had previously stated in response to a written question that "As compliance action has been commenced on all of the listed taxpayers" — that is, all 106 — "they are no longer eligible for consideration under the VDP." That was on April 20, 2009.

The CRA then changed its policy position.

Quite simply, at least 20 rich Canadians have avoided penalty or prosecution because they have been given special treatment. Why? It is unacceptable that, after receiving a tax holiday, this "tough on crime" government gives these wealthy tax dodgers a vacation from prosecution.

Canadians using banks in our country pay all their taxes. Why are Canadians with foreign bank accounts, some containing millions of dollars, getting a tax holiday under this government? Who is being protected? Why is this government not being tough on tax-cheating criminals?

The LGT bank affair in Liechtenstein did not stay unique for long, for a couple of years later a similar situation arose with regard to a bank in Switzerland. Again, the Government of Canada benefited from the work of other countries to the tune of being given the files of 1,785 accounts held by Canadians in this one bank in Switzerland. I do not have as much to say on this issue because the government is much more secretive about this affair, but we do know you could not open an account in this particular bank for less than half a million dollars; and we do know that if the CRA works as quickly on this file as they have on the Liechtenstein file, none of us will be alive when they conclude their investigation.

Whether the accounts are in Canada or overseas, the fundamental issue is the same. Tax fairness, like justice, must be seen to be done. Honest, law-abiding, tax-paying Canadians should not have to feel let down by a federal government unable or unwilling to make a serious effort to recoup monies from Canadians who try to avoid paying their fair share.

Honourable senators, the federal government must do the right thing and make the names of Canadians with accounts in Liechtenstein and Switzerland public. These wealthy tax cheats benefit from taxpayer-funded services, such as Canada's health care system when they get sick or when a family member gets sick, but they refuse to fund their fair share of the system. These people must be judged by Canadians in the court of public opinion.

As the lawyer for Heinrich Kieber, the man who stole the list from the bank in Liechtenstein, said:

Settlements in these situations must be made public. And they must be made public for two reasons, first to ensure

that there isn't a cozy deal between the government and some very rich politically influential people, on one side.

And on the other side as a deterrent to anyone else who might be thinking of doing this. Because as you can imagine if someone is out there cheating on taxes and he's been publicly exposed he won't become a knight. He won't exactly be an honoured citizen who's given awards. He won't be appointed to State business and State Commissions. And that's very important. . . .

And that is how it should be, because paying taxes is an essential civil responsibility. And the rest of us are the ones who pay for what these people don't pay.

The government recently announced that 60,000 Canadians will receive the Queen's Jubilee Medal. I am sure that no senator would want that medal to be awarded to an overseas tax cheat, but if the names are not made public, how will we know?

Colleagues, I wish to impress upon this chamber just how serious a problem we are facing. LGT Bank in Liechtenstein and UBS Bank in Switzerland are just two banks in Europe. Over 1,800 Canadians were found to be stashing money in accounts with these institutions. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

In fiscal year 2009-10 alone, the CRA has estimated that there is approximately \$1 billion in overseas tax havens. One billion dollars is a very alarming amount to find, and how many billions of dollars remain undiscovered by the CRA in tax havens around the world?

Again, honourable senators, there has not been a single tax evasion charge laid in any of the cases of Canadians hiding their money in Liechtenstein or Switzerland. Not a single one of those Canadians has checked into prison because of their tax dodging. Billions in unpaid taxes have been identified, but a woefully small amount has been recouped. Put simply, there has been no meaningful action from the CRA on this extremely serious issue.

In October 2010, a report from the CRA acknowledges the problem. The report notes that many cases that could potentially represent a significant criminal non-compliance are rejected by agency enforcement groups because of limited resources or other workload pressures. This report, which is again from the CRA, goes on to say that offices are closing smaller cases of a lower dollar value — can I have five more minutes?

The Hon. the Speaker: Agreed?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Downe: The report goes on to say that offices are choosing smaller cases of a lower dollar value that do not necessarily represent the greatest risk. In other words, CRA officials are taking the easy way out, rejecting risky cases of large-scale tax evasion in favour of more certain, smaller victories.

The report goes further in pointing out that the tax avoidance audit area refers only 0.2 per cent of its cases to the Criminal Investigation Program, the branch of the CRA mandated to investigate suspected cases of tax evasion, despite the fact that there is a high likelihood of evasion in this population versus the general audit population.

As I mentioned earlier, the amounts in Canadian-held Liechtenstein bank accounts totalled over \$100 million, ranging from a minimum of \$500,000 to the one account with over \$12 million. None of these cases would be considered quick hits by any measure, but certainly every effort should be made by the CRA to recoup lost revenue from 100 per cent of these tax avoiders. A mere 0.2 per cent is a failure of leadership by Minister Shea and the senior management of the CRA.

In conclusion, honourable senators, ordinary Canadians who obey the law and pay their taxes want to know why there is a double standard. Why are a few wealthy Canadians getting a tax holiday from this government? Canadians want to know where is the minister responsible for the Canada Revenue Agency, the Honourable Gail Shea? Why is she allowing this to happen? Why is she allowing tax cheats with hidden accounts in tax havens to escape Canadian courts and prison?

Hon. Carolyn Stewart Olsen: Would the honourable senator take a question?

Senator Downe: Yes.

Senator Stewart Olsen: This may be my ignorance about what the honourable senator has laid out before us, but I do not know how we would go about finding out how much money and who puts it into these tax havens. Are they not protected by the governments there with a lot of secrecy?

• (1750)

From what I understand, we know about the Liechtenstein ones because someone leaked the document. I am wondering what the honourable senator's advice would be as to how to go about those first steps of finding these people.

Senator Downe: Certainly I am no expert, but it appears from the literature I have read and referenced in the speech, there are tax avoidance agreements that other countries have signed. For example, once the cat was out of the bag in Liechtenstein, over 20 countries had already signed tax avoidance agreements. If you open an account there and you are a citizen of the United States, the United States government is aware of it. Canada has not done that.

The other area is we are signing all these international agreements. For example, we will soon have a treaty on Panama before this chamber. Panama is one of the most abusive tax havens in the world, and there are serious allegations about illegal drug money from South America pouring into Panama. We are going to sign a free trade agreement. We can put some pressure on them to have a tax agreement affecting Canadians with accounts in their country.

There is simply too much money hidden overseas that we can be using in this country for a host of projects. Every time we raise something in this country, the question is: How much will it cost and how will we fund it? One big pool of money is these unpaid taxes, penalty and fines that are not being collected.

Hon. Catherine S. Callbeck: Will the honourable senator take a question?

Senator Downe: Yes, of course.

Senator Callbeck: The honourable senator spoke of the 106 Canadians. I think he referred to roughly \$100 million, the lowest being \$500,000 and the top \$12 million. He mentioned that CRA has allowed 20 of them to pay back money, with no penalty. What about the other 86? Will the CRA still allow them to pay their money back and that is it, no penalty, nothing?

Senator Downe: With respect to the documents the CRA sent me, and I cannot remember if it was an access request or a written question, they originally responded to me that no one would be eligible for this voluntary disclosure because it is now public and they are all under investigation. Then they said, as I indicated in my speech, that 20 of them will not be charged because they voluntarily declared.

It makes no sense why some can do it and others cannot and why they changed their policy. I do not know if they are escaping or what they are doing with the other 86 people. I do not have that information.

(On motion of Senator Carignan, debate adjourned.)

NATIONAL FINANCE

COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED TO MEET DURING SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Joseph A. Day, pursuant to notice of earlier this day, moved:

That, until March 31, 2012, for the purposes of any study of a bill, the subject matter of a bill or estimates, the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance:

- (a) have power to sit even though the Senate may then be sitting, with the application of rule 95(4) being suspended in relation thereto; and
- (b) be authorized, pursuant to rule 95(3)(a), to sit from Monday to Friday, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for a period exceeding one week.

He said: Honourable senators, this is a motion to allow the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance to sit outside its normal time, but only until the end of March, so that we can meet the deadline of ensuring that the government has money to continue to operate into April and beyond. The committee is requesting permission to sit.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

(The Senate adjourned until Wednesday, February 29, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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SENATE



SÉNAT

CANADA



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION

• 41st PARLIAMENT

• VOLUME 148

• NUMBER 55

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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(Daily index of proceedings appears at back of this issue).

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THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

NUTRITION

Hon. Nicole Eaton: Honourable senators, government intervention in personal nutrition and food choices has been the subject of heated debate for years. I strongly disagree that the government should dictate what we put in our mouths. Canadians have a responsibility to choose what they eat, and they must take initiative to educate themselves on the health consequences that go along with their choices.

Rather than imposing regulations, our government has been working very closely with the food and beverage industry to voluntarily reduce such additives as trans fats, salt and sugar. To assist consumers in making informed food choices, our government made nutrition labelling for most prepackaged foods mandatory in 2007, and our government has gone much further in educating Canadians to make healthier lifestyle decisions.

Today, the Health Canada website goes beyond Canada's Food Guide. There are details of the ingredients in most foods, including fast foods and brand-name prepared foods. It is extremely simple to determine levels of all fats, salt, sugar and calories. There are recommended daily calorie guides, as well as portion sizes. There are user-friendly interactive tools to assist in calculating nutrients, designing menus and tracking consumption.

The industry has followed suit. Almost all fast food restaurants publish nutrition charts on their websites for the menu choices they offer. Grocery shelves stock numerous products that are lower in fat, lower in sodium, lower in sugar and lower in calories. Still, there is the elephant in the room — or should I say on the plate: portion size — one that we can control.

Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital recently reviewed 40 published studies on whether sugar is one of the culprits in the obesity epidemic. They found that sugar had no effect on weight compared with diets that provided the same calories from other carbohydrates. So what is the culprit? Surprise, surprise! We are back to the elephant! It is portion size. It is as simple as the amount of calories we eat. Over-consumption is the guilty party.

The portion size for salad is a small plate, not a huge bowl soaked in fat-filled toppings and dressing. A portion of protein is four ounces — not a 12-ounce steak, half a chicken or a triple burger with cheese and bacon. Potatoes are not bad for you, but when the potato weighs as much as an entire squash, it poses a

problem. What about those gigantic muffins that probably contain two meals' worth of calories and an entire day's recommended consumption of sugar, fat and carbohydrates? You get the idea.

The damaging effects of poor nutrition, supersized portions and lack of exercise are everywhere — in ads, on websites, in health-related articles and in books and magazines. I agree the government should educate, recommend and provide helpful tools, but it should never assume responsibility for behaviour. Canadians must take their lives into their own hands when it comes to their health and the health of their families.

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL COAL BOWL CLASSIC NATIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, earlier this month, the Thirty-first Annual Coal Bowl Classic National Basketball Tournament was held in Breton Education Centre at New Waterford, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. From January 28 to February 4, 10 young men's teams from across the country slept, ate and played basketball at the junior/senior high school in the former coal mining town of New Waterford.

As in previous years, volunteers and donors from across the Island and the province worked hard to ensure that the tournament was a complete success. This year, of course, was no different as spectators enjoyed a week-long tournament that culminated in the Three Oaks Senior High School Axeman, from Summerside, Prince Edward Island, taking home the title as champions. Congratulations to them!

Honourable senators, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Coal Bowl, the board of directors established a "Wall of Recognition" that honours the volunteers and donors who work so hard to make the Coal Bowl the national success that it has become. The "Wall" plaque is hung in the gym entrance and houses the "Shining Star Awards." Such awards have been given to the local Knights of Columbus Council, who have hosted the Coal Bowl banquet each year since its inception. Others who have received this recognition include Manulife Financial, the local credit union and the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board.

This year, the Shining Star Award was presented to Lorraine Sheppard. A teacher and now a principal, from River Ryan, Lorraine has been very active on the Coal Bowl Board of Directors and served as co-chair from 2002 to 2010. I have known Lorraine for many years. Her proven leadership and organizational skills are second to none and have led to this much-deserved recognition.

Honourable senators, I am sure you will join me in thanking all the volunteers who have made this year's Coal Bowl a success. As well, we send our congratulations to Lorraine Sheppard on receiving the Shining Star Award this year.

ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE AND WESTERN SCIENCE

Hon. Lillian Eva Dyck: Honourable senators, on February 18, I gave an invited topical lecture entitled "The Medicine Wheel and Western Science" to the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting. The theme for this year's conference in Vancouver was "Flattening the World: Building a Global Knowledge Society." The challenge of this year's theme, for example, is how to address global-scale problems, such as climate change, which affect many things such as agriculture, public health, survivor of coastal cities, and so on. In other words, the conference theme recognizes the interconnectedness of climate change and the rest of the earth's systems and human existence.

I briefly presented three different ways of viewing and doing science: Western science, feminist science and Aboriginal science. In Western science, it is incorrectly assumed that scientific knowledge is value-free and that personal or cultural beliefs are irrelevant. However, scientists, like everyone else, do have gender and cultural biases that can lead to false interpretations of their data and wrong conclusions. An example of gender bias is the recent belief that women are not susceptible to heart disease. We now know that is not the case. An example of a racial bias felt by most Western scientists is that Aboriginals become obese because they possess a faulty "thrifty gene" that makes them store extra calories. Now, it is widely recognized that diet and lifestyle are the main factors in obesity, regardless of race.

• (1340)

In feminist science, the male bias in Western science and its hierarchical approach have been exposed. In feminist science, instead of having research lead only by a principal investigator, the questions or problems to be researched are generated in collaboration with the community affected by the research. Feminist thinking has changed the way science is done. Collaborative team approaches, with accountability to communities, are now the norm.

Finally, using the medicine wheel of the Plains Indians to analyze Western science, I concluded that Western science is unbalanced because it does not include the intuitive or spiritual aspects of thinking. Moreover, Western science is based on reductionist thinking, rather than the holistic, interconnected mode of thinking of traditional Aboriginal peoples. I gave examples of how spiritual insight has helped Western scientists solve problems. I concluded that, to have more creativity in scientific thinking, it would be smart to fully include intuition and spiritual insight in scientific thinking. Furthermore, it would be smart to have culturally diverse teams in order to maximize solving complex problems, such as climate change and quantum physics. Such an approach would bring many different perspectives, or preconceptions, and different ways of thinking that would likely lead to better and more comprehensive or effective solutions.

Honourable senators, Western scientists are beginning to see the value of traditional Aboriginal environmental knowledge and are actively seeking input, for example, from the indigenous peoples of the North. It is good to see that Aboriginal knowledge is finally being recognized as being scientifically valid, but there is a real danger of exploiting the gatherers and keepers of

Aboriginal knowledge. Such Aboriginal elders, hunters, and others ought to be full partners in scientific investigations. That is, they should be involved not just in providing data but in formulating the research questions, designing the methods, interpreting the data, and making conclusions, and they should receive equitable benefits, such as sharing authorship and receiving a share of the research funds to pay for their labour or the expenses incurred in their work with Western scientists.

I look forward to the time when Aboriginal knowledge and ways of knowing are fully respected and honoured by the Western scientific community.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN CANADA

Hon. Donald H. Oliver: Honourable senators, today marks the last day of Black History Month. I would like to thank Nova Scotia senators Moore and Mercer for their contributions to this debate.

One month ago, I rose in the chamber to comment on some of the challenges African Canadians are facing in today's society, such as racial discrimination and inequality. The *Montreal Gazette* published an op-ed piece that I penned earlier this week on Black History Month. In it, I stated that racism and prejudice still exist in Canada today because slavery was a common practice throughout our Canadian history.

There are still some remnants of slavery today. They manifest themselves through subtle acts of racism and discrimination. Honourable senators, I rise today to share with you specific examples of some of these acts of racism, to show you that the sting of racism still exists in Canada today.

First, in September 2011, an officer of the Barrie, Ontario, police service was under investigation for allegations that he had uttered racial slurs and made rude gestures at an officer in his command. The 35-year veteran suddenly resigned after the allegations against him were filed. The OPP are investigating the complaint, and a private human resources firm is conducting a broader investigation into the accusations.

On September 20, a 15-year-old Ottawa minor hockey player was the subject of a racial slur while on the ice. His opponent was suspended for one game and assigned to sensitivity training for calling him the "N word."

Just days before, honourable senators will remember that the Canadian-born, Philadelphia Flyers forward Wayne Simmonds was the victim of a racist attack during a pre-season hockey game in London, Ontario. A banana was thrown at him during a shootout attempt. In a post-game interview, Simmonds said he did not know that the incident was related to his being Black. He said:

"That's a first for me. I guess it's something I obviously have to deal with — being a Black player playing in a predominantly White sport."

NBC sports called the act a "shameful, racist display."

Just last week, a Montreal designer made headlines here in Ottawa during Ottawa Fashion Week for all the wrong reasons.

He sent white models down the runway with painted blackface. The designer says it was a misunderstanding, and a spokesman said the collection was unquestionably about art and had no connection with race.

However, the image of White women with painted blackface sends a strong message and shows a lack of sensitivity and awareness of the history of Blacks and racism.

Honourable senators, the four examples I have cited — and there are many others — confirm the importance of celebrating Black History Month.

There is a need across Canada, and indeed around the world, for greater cultural awareness and tolerance and, above all, a greater understanding of the history of Blacks and other minorities and their hardships. Cultural awareness will allow us to be more tolerant and sensitive towards others and towards their realities, lifestyles and heritage.

In conclusion, honourable senators, together we must find ways to promote ethnic diversity and minority inclusion and solutions to eliminating racial discrimination.

[Translation]

MR. MIKAËL KINGSBURY

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, today I would like to tell you about a brave and determined young man who is doing us proud around the world.

Mikaël Kingsbury is a 19-year-old moguls skier from Deux-Montagnes and a Fondation Élite de Saint-Eustache scholarship recipient. He recently won the prestigious Crystal Globe, the top prize awarded each year to the moguls world cup champion.

Mikaël is an exceptional young man. At the Vancouver Olympic Games, he was not a member of the national team, but his job was to open the course to get it ready for the competition. His performance was so impressive that experts in the field said his performance preparing the course would have earned him a fourth-place finish in the Olympic Games.

Mikaël is now a member of the national team, and he has been so successful this year that he confirmed his world champion status before the competition year was out. His performance in Naeba, Japan, was one for the history books. He had to cope with difficult conditions, including a cold and a dense fog that tried to slow him down, but he demonstrated the kind of calm that our very best athletes possess, and he found enough energy to make a noteworthy descent that any great champion would be proud of.

This season, Mikaël won eight gold medals and one silver in nine competitions. He accumulated 880 points, while the runner-up managed just 459. What is most impressive about Mikaël is

that his ability to conquer moguls is exceeded only by his ability to stay grounded. Despite the fact that he is the youngest skier ever to win the Crystal Globe, his humility and determination are key to his success and make him a role model for thousands of young Canadians.

As a child, he collected photos of freestyle skiers, hoping just to ski alongside them one day. Now his dream has taken him to the top of his sport. Mikaël has shown us that when we believe, when we work tirelessly toward a specific goal, we are sure to succeed.

This young prodigy does not intend to stop there. He now has a specific goal in mind: the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Russia. Until then, he will continue to train and compete in events like the World Cup, much to the delight of his parents, Robert and Julie, and the entire Canadian freestyle ski team. Mikaël knows that he has his work cut out for him in Russia. He can continue to count on the unwavering support of his usual team as well as his fans.

Mikaël is following in the footsteps of Olympic champions like Alexandre Bilodeau and Jean-Luc Brassard, and he continues to make Canada proud.

Once again, congratulations, Mikaël. We are all so proud of you.

[English]

PINK SHIRT DAY

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, today is Pink Tie and Pink Shirt Day, intended to draw your attention to the issue of bullying.

Honourable senators, it provides me with an opening to tell you of a recent publication by Anne Huestis Scott, entitled *The Boy Who Was Bullied*. The story is about John Peters Humphrey, who was a victim of bullying.

• (1350)

John Humphrey was born in Hampton, New Brunswick. He lost his parents at an early age and while playing as a young man, he lost his arm. As a result of his disability he was bullied by his peers as he grew up in this small community. He was not discouraged by this. Instead, he used the inspiration to help those less fortunate and to ensure everyone was treated equally. He used this inspiration to go on and become one of the leaders of the modern human rights system, having drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1947 while working at the United Nations with Eleanor Roosevelt.

Scott's book is useful in both documenting the life of a Canadian hero and in highlighting the reality of bullying and how it can be overcome. The book has been accepted by the Department of Education in New Brunswick as an educational resource for schoolteachers. It addresses not only human rights but is very timely in its focus on the difficult issue of bullying. This

book is a resource to help young Canadians realize that they can overcome childhood bullying and, like Humphrey, go on to make a contribution bettering the lives of Canadians as well as others around the world.

MS. MEGAN LESLIE, M.P.

STATEMENT IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau: Honourable senators, on Monday, February 27, Halifax NDP Member of Parliament Megan Leslie made a statement in the other place that senators are so unimportant that she cannot name all the ones from Nova Scotia. The only three senators she knew were Senators Cowan, Cordy and Oliver and that they were hard workers. I happen to agree that they work hard, but it is typical of the NDP that she would only have bothered to learn the names of senators from the Halifax Regional Municipality. What is striking is that she cannot name the other senators from Nova Scotia, yet feels completely qualified to judge the quality of their work. It is typical NDP, to Leslie and her Nova Scotia provincial NDP government colleagues, that she would only know the Halifax senators because to Dippers, Nova Scotia is comprised of Halifax.

This is why her Nova Scotia NDP friends eliminated the ferry from Yarmouth to the United States, with no consultation whatsoever. We never heard a peep from self-described hard-working Megan Leslie. She blows her own horn that she is close to the people, but actions speak louder than words. Rather than take French immersion courses at Université Sainte-Anne in Church Point, Nova Scotia, one of the finest French language universities in Canada, she takes her French lessons in Quebec; so much for her support of Nova Scotia. However, to the NDP nothing of value exists outside of metro Halifax anyway.

Her provincial NDP colleagues have decided to eliminate the decades old protection of three rural Nova Scotia Acadian and one Black provincial seat in Nova Scotia. Again, not a word from Leslie on this extremely important subject to Nova Scotians. She never made a peep when her NDP friends increased the HST by 2 per cent in Nova Scotia.

Leslie parrots her party's position on abolishing the Senate in favour of handing over increased political powers in Ottawa to the more populated regions of Canada. Atlantic Canada senators now make up approximately 28.5 per cent of the Senate. This is 28.5 percent of the power of one of the two houses of Parliament.

In the House of Commons after the next election, Atlantic Canada representation will be down to 9.5 per cent. The future will not get any better. However, the Dipper wants to abolish our regional political clout. The scary part about Dippers like Leslie is that they do not know any better. They actually believe their own ideologically driven rhetoric. This is the same Dipper who went to Washington to lobby to kill the Keystone pipeline project and badmouth the Alberta oil sands, an industry which drives the Canadian economy. To lobby in a foreign country against the interests of your own nation seems like very poor judgment to me.

Leslie might talk to the more seasoned colleagues in her caucus, like Peter Stoffer, who makes it a point to be familiar with and respectful of members and senators of all sides. He may not

always agree with us, but he has the courtesy and decency to know our names before he criticizes us. Honourable senators, it makes one almost wish for the reform of the Commons.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HARMONIOUS SOCIETY

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I rise today to celebrate the last day of Black History Month and talk about the great historical contributions Black Canadian youth have made in our country. For a number of years now I have had the honour and privilege of working with many young Black Canadians on a variety of projects. I have watched with great admiration the contributions these young people have made in their communities and to our country. Although I recognize that Black History Month is a time where we reflect on the contributions Black Canadians have made in our country and celebrate their achievements, I think it is important to also recognize the challenges that many of them continue to face.

My daughter Farzana is a member of the country's Black community and I have witnessed firsthand the challenges she has faced because of the colour of her skin. Throughout her childhood, she was left out and not invited to birthday parties and other events for the sole reason that she looked different from her friends. She suffered other forms of racism because she was Black. Fortunately Farzana, like many other Black Canadians, triumphed in spite of these social challenges. However, many Black Canadians have not.

Over the last few weeks as a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, I have studied Bill C-10, the Safe Streets and Communities Act. During this time I interacted with a movement called Blacks Behind Bars who educated me on the overrepresentation of Black Canadians in our prisons and the negative impact this bill will have on all minorities in Canada.

Honourable senators, as we celebrate Black History Month, we must remember that we, the senators, have a duty to protect all Canadian citizens, particularly minorities. This includes Black Canadians.

When I was a young girl, my father wanted me to be a politician and my mother wanted me to be a pianist. Although it may be obvious who won that battle, for a number of years I did attempt to learn how to play the piano. I remember arguing with my mother when she would force me to practise. I never really enjoyed playing the piano, and in an effort to rebel against my mother, I often used to play only on the black keys or only on the white keys. This, of course, produced a very unpleasant sound. However, it also taught me an important lesson: In life, like in music, you must not only play on the black keys or only on the white ones as this will never create harmony.

As we celebrate Black History Month, I urge all honourable senators to recognize the importance of coming together and putting aside our differences in an effort to create a society that lives in harmony — a harmonious Canada.

NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, I rise to draw your attention to North Koreans detained in China who face torture, imprisonment and possible execution if returned to their country of origin.

Every year, between 2,000 and 3,000 North Koreans attempt to escape impoverishment and subjugation in their country. An underground railroad takes them through China and Southeast Asia, often to friends and family in South Korea. Some, caught in transit, never reach their destination. China has a policy of forcibly repatriating undocumented North Koreans.

Earlier this month, Chinese authorities detained some 30 North Korean defectors. Several are reportedly children with parents in South Korea. Yesterday, Amnesty International said nine of those detained had been sent back. They will be the first to be returned since the new leader has come into place and has threatened to treat as war criminals anyone caught trying to cross into China during the 100 days of national mourning following the death of his father.

South Korea raised the plight of the defectors this Monday at a high-level session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. It followed the adoption last Friday of a resolution urging China to change its policy on North Korean defectors by a South Korean parliamentary committee.

• (1400)

The resolution's sponsor, legislator Park Sun-Young, has been on a hunger strike for nine days and living in a tent outside the Chinese embassy in Seoul, to draw attention to the issue. The United Nations Refugee Agency last week urged China to uphold its obligation as a state party to the United Nations Refugee Convention and not forcibly return North Koreans to a country where they will face persecution, if not death.

I ask you to join me here in the Senate in calling on China to observe its obligations toward North Korean refugees under international human rights law.

OIL SANDS

Hon. Bert Brown: Honourable senators, I rise to give you some figures from the Canadian Energy Research Institute regarding Canada's oil sands boom. Alberta is not the only jurisdiction to revel in bitumen wealth. Here are the estimated gains the oil industry will have provided to the rest of Canada between 2010 and 2035. The percentages of jobs outside of Alberta are as follows: Ontario will get 52 per cent; British Columbia will get 25 per cent; Quebec will get 13 per cent; and the rest of Canada will get 10 per cent.

The total estimated GDP of the Canadian oil sands will be \$2.1 trillion. The total combined taxes paid will be \$311 billion in federal taxes, \$105 billion in provincial taxes and \$350 billion in provincial royalties; and the United States will get \$521 billion.

The employment in the United States is expected to grow from 21,000 to 465,000. It is estimated that for every two jobs created in Canada, one will be created in the United States. Employment in Canada is expected to grow from 75,000 to 905,000, and

126,000 of that will be outside of Alberta. Employees will earn approximately \$25 billion per year.

The supplies and services the industry will purchase outside of Alberta will be as follows: Ontario, \$63 billion; B.C., \$28 billion; Quebec, \$14 billion; and the rest of Canada, \$12 billion.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTERNAL ECONOMY, BUDGETS AND ADMINISTRATION

SEVENTH REPORT OF COMMITTEE PRESENTED

Hon. David Tkachuk, Chair of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, presented the following report:

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

The Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration has the honour to present its

SEVENTH REPORT

Your Committee has approved the Senate Main Estimates for the fiscal year 2012-2013 and recommends their adoption. (Annex A)

Your Committee notes that the proposed total budget is \$92,216,846.

An overview of the 2012-2013 budget will be forwarded to every Senator's office.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVID TKACHUK
Chair

(For text of report, see today's Journals of the Senate, Appendix, p. 913.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

(On motion of Senator Tkachuk, report placed on the Orders of the Day for consideration at the next sitting of the Senate.)

[Translation]

SAFE DRINKING WATER FOR FIRST NATIONS BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government) presented Bill S-8, An Act respecting the safety of drinking water on First Nation lands.

(Bill read first time.)

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

(On motion of Senator Carignan, bill placed on the Orders of the Day for second reading two days hence.)

[English]

CANADA-AFRICA PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

BILATERAL VISITS, JANUARY 17-20, 2012—
REPORT TABLED

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association on the Bilateral Visits to the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of South Sudan, held in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya and Juba, Republic of South Sudan, from January 17 to 20, 2012.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY STATE OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE UNITED STATES

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the state of Canada's defence and security relationships with the United States; and

That the Committee present its final report to the Senate no later than December 31, 2013 and that the Committee retain, until March 31, 2014, all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY STATUS OF AND LESSONS LEARNED
DURING CANADIAN FORCES OPERATIONS
IN AFGHANISTAN

Hon. Pamela Wallin: Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence be authorized to examine and report on the status of, and lessons learned, during Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan; and

That the Committee present its final report to the Senate no later than December 31, 2013 and that the Committee retain, until March 31, 2014, all powers necessary to publicize its findings.

LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS

NOTICE OF INQUIRY

Hon. Richard Neufeld: Honourable senators, I give notice that, two days hence:

I will call the attention of the Senate to the issue of liquefied natural gas in Canada and its associated benefits.

QUESTION PERIOD

HEALTH

NUTRITION NORTH CANADA

Hon. Nick G. Sibbeston: Honourable senators, one year ago I stood here and asked the Leader of the Government in the Senate about the Nutrition North Canada program. This program was instituted by the federal government to provide fresh nutritious food to the remote northern communities. It was a subsidized program for things like vegetables, fruits and milk to remote communities because these sorts of foods are not readily available in the North, and it costs a lot to transport them there.

The government last winter stopped the program and started another program with some differences. In any case, it is clear that despite the amendments made to the program in March 2011, things are not working as they should.

Recently, MLAs from all three territories and Northern Quebec have sent messages to the federal ministers concerned saying that the program is not working. In many cases, despite the subsidy, the food in the stores has not gone down. There have been complaints by people, and those, in turn, were sent to the ministers by the MLAs.

Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate see about investigating those complaints, talk to her ministerial colleagues who are responsible, and see what can be done to ensure that the program is effective in providing cheap and healthy foods to the people of the North?

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I appreciate the honourable senator's ongoing interest and concern about this very important issue.

Obviously, our government, as all of us would be, is committed to providing northerners with healthy food choices at affordable prices.

• (1410)

As the honourable senator alluded in his question, we have been working with Northerners, retailers and suppliers. We created the advisory board made up primarily of Northerners so that

stakeholders' concerns could be brought directly to the centre and could provide recommendations to ensure that the program continues to develop in a positive way that will bring necessary foods to the North.

We have listened to many concerns and have acted on many of them. One of the recommendations we received and upon which we acted was that important food such as baby food is subsidized.

Honourable senators, this program still requires some work, but we have gone some way to delivering good, fresh food to the North and ensuring it is as affordable as possible for the people who live there.

[Translation]

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

RESEARCH

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. In an open letter to the Prime Minister dated February 16, scientists belonging to six Canadian professional organizations pointed out that, since coming to power in 2006, the government has erected a veritable wall between Canadians and publicly funded researchers.

The letter speaks about how, since 2006, communications about the research findings of federal scientists have turned into public relations efforts.

I would like to quote a passage from that letter.

Despite promises that your majority government would follow principles of accountability and transparency, federal scientists in Canada are still not allowed to speak to reporters without the "consent" of media relations officers. Delays in obtaining interviews are often unacceptable and journalists are routinely denied interviews. Increasingly, journalists have simply given up trying to access federal scientists, while scientists at work in federal departments are under undue pressure in an atmosphere dominated by political messaging.

Publicly funded research must not serve political interests, but the interests of science and public debate, which require the free flow of information.

Why has the government implemented a policy that censors these researchers and is criticized by scientists and the media alike?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, that quote reminds me of what my father used to say to me: Believe 98 per cent of what you see and only 4 per cent of what you read.

The fact of the matter is, honourable senators — and I have answered this question before — ministers in this government are the primary spokesperson for their departments, as was the case in the previous government. Scientists share research material and publish research findings, and scientists working for the Government of Canada grant hundreds of interviews to discuss their work. For instance, Fisheries and Oceans scientists responded to approximately 380 science-based media calls annually. Last year, Environment Canada officials completed over 1,200 media interviews, including more than 325 interviews with departmental scientists. Therefore, I believe the premise of the honourable senator's question and the accusations she makes are quite false.

[Translation]

Senator Tardif: Honourable senators, I am not the one making these accusations. This letter addressed to the Prime Minister was sent and signed by the president of the Association des communicateurs scientifiques du Québec, the president of the Association science et bien commun, the president of Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, the president of the Canadian Science Writers' Association, the executive director of the World Federation of Science Journalists and the president of The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada. These six professional organizations are calling for a review of Canada's communication policy.

When will the government act with the transparency it promised and review its communication policy in order to restore freedom of expression to Canadian federal researchers?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I wonder if this same group sent a similar letter to the previous government because ministers in the government are primarily responsible for answering for their departments and that has not changed. This has been the case with our government; it was the case with the short-lived Martin government; and it was the case with the Chrétien government.

To these people who signed the letter, I would simply say they should check their facts because they are clearly misinformed and the numbers I put on the record speak for themselves. There have been many interviews, and scientists have had direct access to the media, so perhaps they should check their facts before writing letters asking for a change in policy.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Honourable senators, just to zero in on the leader's facts, in her answer to Senator Tardif's first question the leader cited statistics, as I heard her, for the number of officials of various departments who have given interviews. I would have to assume that would include communications officers.

How many scientists are free to respond to inquiries from the press about their work, not about department policy but just about the results of their research, without having prior clearance on the questions and the answers from the department?

Senator LeBreton: If the honourable senator had been listening, I did not just say “officials.” I cited 325 interviews with “scientists” from Environment Canada.

Senator Fraser: She said “officials.”

Senator LeBreton: I said “scientists,” I believe.

[Translation]

ELECTIONS CANADA

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

Hon. Maria Chaput: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate and has to do with the redistribution of federal electoral boundaries and, more specifically, the process for appointing members to those commissions.

As you know, the Speaker of the House of Commons has chosen and appointed the 20 members who will now sit on these 10 commissions. These commissions are responsible for redrawing the federal electoral map and holding public hearings to hear testimony and present the new federal electoral map.

How were the names of these newly appointed members obtained? What was the process? Were there any interviews conducted, recommendations made, or CVs obtained? If you do not have the answers, could you get the information?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): Obviously, I would not have that kind of detail at my fingertips, as honourable senators can understand. Through Parliament we passed a piece of legislation to increase the number of seats to ensure that the growing provinces’ populations are properly reflected in the number of seats in the House of Commons. A process is followed, as the honourable senator quite correctly pointed out, through the Speaker of the other place. This has always been the case.

In terms of the exact process, honourable senators, I do not have the details, but I will be very happy to take the question as notice.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: I would like to ask a supplementary question. This review takes place every 10 years and has a major impact on the democratic process. These commissions have the obligation to consider communities of interest and the rights of official language minority communities. How did you ensure that these 20 members are a diverse group? Were there directives in this regard, and if so, by whom were they issued?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, the people who have been tasked with the responsibility for redrawing Canada’s electoral boundaries would take into consideration all of the factors that are required to ensure the boundaries are properly constituted.

• (1420)

I have great faith in the people who put their names forward and agree to perform these tasks on behalf of the population of Canada. All who undertake such responsibilities act in good faith. However, if there is any further information that I am able to acquire, I would be happy to do so.

[Translation]

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, as a result of complaints that official language minority communities were not taken into account during the last redistribution process, the Commissioner of Official Languages recommended that the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act be amended in order to ensure that these communities would be clearly identified and included in the definitions of “community of interest” or “community of identity” to be taken into account during the redistribution process.

The government still has not implemented the commissioner’s recommendations, which date back to 2006. Since it is too late to make such amendments to the legislation in time for the upcoming redistribution, will the government ensure that these commissions take official language minority communities into account during this process?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, that is interesting, but I do not believe this government was the government in office when the boundaries were last redrawn. If the Commissioner of Official Languages has some particular complaints, perhaps she should look in a mirror.

As the honourable senator states, the Commissioner of Official Languages made some recommendations in 2006, which happened to be the year that we formed the government. I am quite confident that the individuals responsible for redrawing the boundaries will take into consideration the representations of the Commissioner of Official Languages. As the honourable senator mentioned, there are public hearings into the various boundaries. I am sure that if people find that an area is not addressed properly, they will have ample opportunity to do so.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: The leader reminded me of something, and that is that there will be public hearings. She can be certain that the communities will react. I learned that the commissions were going to hold only one public hearing in each province. Is this true? And, if so, how will this one public hearing be announced? Will the communities have enough time to prepare?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: I assume the honourable senator is asking about a process that happened before we formed the government. I cannot answer for the previous government. The honourable senator will have to check the records in the archives to see what happened.

There is a process for public hearings, and I will add a request for further information on that process when a written response is prepared for the honourable senator.

[Translation]

Senator Chaput: I did not really understand the government leader's response. I do not know if she was talking about what will happen now. Will the current commissions hold a single public hearing in each province or not?

I might add that, despite my political affiliation, my question is non-partisan in nature. I asked the same questions in the past, before I became a senator and when these public hearings were being held at a time when the other party was in power. I voiced my concerns at that time. What I am saying is non-partisan. I am concerned only about the rights of official language communities, knowing very well that quite often, when no one is talking about something, it is forgotten.

I would like to reiterate my question. Are the existing commissions going to hold only one public hearing or several? Will those public hearings be announced in a manner that gives the communities time to prepare their response?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: I thank the honourable senator, but I thought I answered that. I made reference to what happened in the past, and I offered to add information about the process for public hearings in the written response to the honourable senator.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

CRIMINAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS— PENAL REFORM

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. The Quebec media recently reported its concern about how long it takes to update the criminal records of francophone criminals. It can take up to 55 months, compared to just 34 months for the criminal records of anglophone criminals.

Some 420,000 criminal records of francophone Canadians are waiting to be updated right now in Canada. In a report released last June, the Auditor General of Canada said the RCMP was to blame. The time it takes to update criminal records has quadrupled since 2005, in other words, since the last Liberal government. I am not blaming the RCMP, because it needs resources in order to get this done.

While the Conservative Party has joined forces with the National Rifle Association to deregulate gun ownership in Canada, while it insists on minimum sentences for purely

ideological reasons, while it wastes taxpayers' money on building ineffective, unnecessary megaprisons, can the Leader of the Government tell us when the government will finally get serious about victims and public safety and give its administration the resources it needs to operate?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government): The honourable senator cited statistics in the Province of Quebec for a process over which the RCMP has jurisdiction. I will seek to obtain an answer for the honourable senator.

In terms of victims of crimes, this government has taken great steps forward with the whole issue of compensating and dealing with victims of crime, while ensuring that the perpetrators of these crimes are properly incarcerated.

[Translation]

Senator Hervieux-Payette: The problem seems to stem from the ability of the Canadian Criminal Real Time Identification Services, which is overseen by the RCMP, to process francophone files. It seems to me that the organization should be able to find enough employees in Canada who can at least speak French and English, because in general, people are bilingual.

Police officers are already worried about the idea of getting rid of the gun registry. They are also worried about having to work in an unsafe environment because criminal records are not up to date. As the president of the Fraternité des policiers de Montréal, Yves Francoeur, said:

Information is key to public safety, and up-to-date information is extremely important.

Can the government leader tell us how the Conservative government plans to tackle Canada's real public safety problems? When will the government stop saying that it is investing plenty of money for victims, when the amount allocated to victims is negligible compared to what is spent on those serving time?

[English]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, I would like Senator Hervieux-Payette to tell me where all these new penitentiaries are. Where are these phantom penitentiaries? There are none. The fact is that through Bill C-10 and various initiatives taken by the government, and thanks to our colleague Senator Boisvenu who has been one of the leaders in this area, especially in the province of Quebec, the government is working extremely hard not only to ensure that people who perpetrate violent crimes against their victims are properly incarcerated, but also that victims' voices are heard and properly acknowledged in our system of justice.

The honourable senator made reference to the records and she seemed to cite some difficulties in terms of delays within the RCMP. I can only say to the honourable senator that I will have to get more information from the Department of Public Safety on that.

• (1430)

Senator Hervieux-Payette: I understand that the leader cannot give us the figure for the new prisons, and it will probably not be in the budget because that weight will be put on the shoulders of the provinces. Most of the time these minimal sentences will provide for those who are convicted to be jailed. I can quote the number given by the Minister of Justice for Ontario yesterday. The minister said it would cost \$1.2 billion, and that is just for one province. Multiply by four and we are close to a \$5-billion figure that was stated.

As far as I am concerned, the leader cannot address the question by checking it off as though her government is not responsible for its policy. The government should either pay for it or change the policy that no one agrees with.

Senator LeBreton: The honourable senator keeps perpetrating this myth that new penitentiaries are being built. Please tell me where they are. I would be interested in having a look at them.

I saw Madeleine Meilleur's statements yesterday. It is typical to hear misinformation like that from a minister in the McGuinty government. She is just following the lead of her own premier. However, I think it is safe to say that the cost of crime on our system and for the victims far exceeds the cost of fighting crime.

The honourable senator mentioned the province of Ontario. Since taking office, our government has increased support payments to the Province of Ontario — get this Senator Hervieux-Payette — 77 per cent, or by nearly \$8.4 billion. Toughening sentences does not create new criminals; it simply keeps criminals in jail for a more appropriate length of time.

I again point out to honourable senators that when we ran in the May 2011 election, when we ran in 2008 and when we ran in 2006, we made it very clear that this government was finally going to take criminal activity seriously and do something about it.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: Perhaps the leader can explain what will happen to the 420,000 cases that have not been dealt with. One must understand these people will have a hard time finding a job, will not necessarily be productive and will be excluded from making a living once they return to society. These cases must be solved immediately, and this is a responsibility of the federal government. They cannot throw that back in the courtyard of the provinces.

When will the government deal with these 420,000 cases and make sure that the inquiry is done, the report is done, and these people are free to work in the regular labour market?

Senator LeBreton: I believe I acknowledged that I would have to go back and get information on the numbers that the honourable senator cites for the province of Quebec. I did undertake to seek more information and provide a written response. That is all I can really add at this point in time.

[Translation]

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have the honour to table the answer to the oral question asked by the Honourable Senator Hubley on February 16, 2012, concerning heritage lighthouse protection.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

HERITAGE LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION

(Response to question raised by Hon. Elizabeth Hubley on February 16, 2012)

The Report on the Implementation of the *Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act* was adopted by the Senate on October 20, 2011. The Government is closely examining each of the recommendations contained in the report which pertain to both the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Parks Canada Agency. An official government response is due to be tabled in the Senate prior to March 18, 2012. The Government recognizes the historical importance of Canada's lighthouses as a symbol of our nation's maritime heritage.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I would like to inform the Senate that, pursuant to rule 27(1), when we proceed to Government Business, the Senate will address the items in the following order: first, consideration of the ninth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, then Bill C-10, followed by all other items according to the order in which they appear on the Order Paper.

[English]

SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITIES BILL

NINTH REPORT OF LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the ninth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs (Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, with amendments and observations), presented in the Senate on February 28, 2012.

Hon. John D. Wallace moved the adoption of the report.

He said: Honourable senators, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak to the ninth report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. That report, of course, is in regard to our study in consideration of Bill C-10. I will explain to honourable senators the amendments that were recommended and approved by our committee, and I will take them through each of those in a moment.

Before doing so, I want to say that we went through a rather exhaustive process over the last four weeks as a committee to consider the bill. In particular, last week we had all-day sessions through the week. I do not say that for anyone to pat us on the back for it; that is what we are here to do and that is the work we do. However, I do want to say that I and I believe all our colleagues on the committee found it to be a very positive experience. I say that because of the work and the focus on the subject matter that was really apparent. It was obviously apparent on this side of the chamber and equally so on the other side of the chamber.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the continuing contribution of Senator Fraser, our deputy chair, who always brings a thoughtful approach. When I was deputy chair and she was chair I learned a great deal from her, and that leadership was very evident last week.

As well, I want to acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator Cowan, who is an ex officio member. He was with us all through the week and contributed in an extremely positive and constructive way. At the end of it, did we all agree on the conclusions? No, we did not, but there were very few if any stones that I felt were left unturned. Therefore I acknowledge and thank all members of the committee, including those I mentioned that are opposite.

As I believe honourable senators are aware, Bill C-10 brought together nine previous bills that had been presented to Parliament and not passed, covered a variety of topics — topics that related to victims of terrorism, vulnerable foreign workers, international transfer of offenders, controlled drugs, sexual offences against children, youth criminal justice, house arrest, parole and pardon. It was a comprehensive and all-inclusive study.

The conclusion of our committee was that we believed certain amendments were required to the bill. Our committee approved or passed six separate amendments, and I would like now to take honourable senators through each of those and describe the nature of them.

The first amendment was in respect of clause 2 of Bill C-10. This amendment to clause 2 would allow the victims of terrorism to sue listed foreign states not only for supporting terrorism but also for directly committing an act of terrorism. This particular amendment expands the cause of action created by the justice for victims of terrorism act to allow victims of terrorism to file an action against a listed foreign state for directly committing an act of terrorism.

The second amendment was in respect of clause 3.1 of Bill C-10. New clause 3.1 defines what is considered to be “terrorist activity” in respect of a foreign state.” This amendment was considered necessary because the state immunity of listed foreign states would be lifted for their terrorist activity as opposed to only being in respect of the support of terrorist activity.

• (1440)

The third amendment is in respect of clause 5 of Bill C-10. This amendment specifies, in the State Immunity Act, that a listed foreign state’s immunity is lifted not only for providing support to terrorism but also for committing terrorist activities. This would allow a Canadian court to hear an action against a listed foreign state for these two reasons; that is, support and terrorist activity.

The fourth amendment is in respect of clause 6 of Bill C-10. This amendment would modify subsection 11(3) of the State Immunity Act to add that a listed foreign state does not benefit from immunity in respect of an action brought against it for its terrorist activity. This means that a successful plaintiff could ask the court for an injunction, specific performance or to recover land or property against a listed foreign state where a successful judgment was registered against it for its support of terrorism or its terrorist activity. Originally, Bill C-10 only allowed this for the listed state’s support of terrorism.

The fifth amendment is in respect of clause 7 of Bill C-10. Sub-clause (a) of the amendment to clause 7 would modify subsection 12(1)(b) of the State Community Act to allow for the seizure of property under Canadian jurisdiction of a listed foreign state that is used or intended to be used for its terrorist activities. Originally, Bill C-10 only allowed for the seizure of property that was used or intended to be used by that listed foreign state for its support of terrorism.

Sub-clause (b) of this amendment would modify subsection 12(1)(d) of the State Immunity Act by adding a new circumstance where the property of a listed foreign state could be seized; namely, when the remedy is executed to satisfy a judgment issued against a listed foreign state for its terrorist activity. However, this subsection specified that property having cultural or historical value could not be seized. Originally, Bill C-10 only allowed for such seizure where a judgment was issued against a listed foreign state for its support of terrorism.

Finally, the sixth amendment is in respect of clause 9 of Bill C-10. This amendment to clause 9 would modify subsection 13(2) of the State Immunity Act to specify that the court could impose penalties or fines against a listed foreign state for failing to produce any document or other information in the course of proceedings before the court for its terrorist activity. Originally, Bill C-10 only allowed this for the listed foreign state’s support of terrorism.

Honourable senators, that is the description and the rationale behind our passing of those six amendments. In addition, we had no shortage of discussion on all the key issues involved with this bill. Those issues were the subject of proposed amendments, but the only amendments that were approved by the committee were those I have just described.

The committee learned such a great deal that going forward we want to bring key issues to the attention of both houses of Parliament. We felt very strongly that further work must be done on many of the issues that were brought before us. As a result of that, we made a series of observations upon which I will touch briefly.

The first observation concerns the issue of mental illness which, unfortunately, is prevalent among incarcerated offenders. Treatment for their mental illness is a real concern. The committee feels very strongly that more must be done from two perspectives. There is an obligation for society to do what we can to assist these people, but we also have an obligation for the protection of society. We want to eliminate repeat offences as much as possible. To have offenders with mental illnesses serve their sentences only to go back into the community is a concern.

We feel this issue should be addressed immediately. We urge the Correctional Service of Canada to address it urgently. As was pointed out by witnesses, in particular Dr. Bradford from Brockville, there are alternative service delivery treatment options that have proven to be effective. The St. Lawrence Valley Correctional and Treatment Centre in Brockville is an example of one.

Our conclusion was that these optional treatments should be looked at and followed up on immediately. We urge the Correctional Service of Canada to take a very strong lead in examining them and, where appropriate, implementing them.

The second observation is in respect of the circumstances of Aboriginal Canadians, both from the perspective of incarcerated Aboriginals and Aboriginal victims. The testimony we heard made it clear that there is a considerably greater percentage of both in Aboriginal communities than in other parts of Canada. That is a serious concern of ours, as I am sure it is a serious concern of the government. It is one thing to be concerned about it and another thing to do something about it. The committee believes that corrective action should be taken on an urgent basis. This will require major societal effort, not only by the federal government but also by the provincial and territorial governments and community organizations. It is time to get on with it. We heard testimony from National Chief Atleo, for whom we have great respect, and I think we have a full appreciation of the circumstances of Aboriginal Canadians.

We also heard testimony from victims of crime. Their testimony was heart wrenching and it left a very strong impact on all of us. The experiences that some of these victims went through were horrendous, but they were not looking for vengeance or pity. To a person, they want the system corrected. They want to reduce victimization. From their experiences they have learned so much that they felt we should know and consider when we are crafting legislation. That had a tremendous impact upon us.

The committee strongly believes that additional effective measures are needed to help victims. This is another matter that involves jurisdictions across the country. It will not be dealt with only under the authority of the federal government. Again, it must involve federal, provincial and territorial governments and communities, and the exchange of ideas and solutions should occur among all levels and include the victims.

On our final observation, the bill provides for youth offenders in certain circumstances who serve their sentences in youth detention to be transferred at age 18 to adult jails or penitentiaries. A very thoughtful concern came out. In many cases, we heard testimony that very good rehabilitative work takes place with the youth when they are incarcerated in youth facilities. When they move to an adult institution, those rehabilitative efforts may end. One of our senators felt strongly — Senator Fraser brought that to our attention — that transitional programs should be in place for youth who, at age 18, find themselves in adult institutions. That was an excellent suggestion.

There is a final thing, and I will touch on it briefly.

• (1450)

The Hon. the Speaker: I regret to advise the honourable senator that the 15 minutes allotted have expired.

Senator Cowan: We will allow five more minutes.

Senator Wallace: Thank you.

I realize that in all likelihood many of these issues will be discussed in further detail at third reading, so I will not go into some of this in detail. It was certainly important to us on the committee, and I know within the steering committee that consisted of Deputy Chair Fraser and Senator Boisvenu, and there was a strong feeling that we had to analyze the key issues within the bill. As I say, there were nine different components. We wanted to ensure that we had evidence before the committee that would delve into all of the issues we could identify within those nine portions of the bill. We wanted to make absolutely certain that we were not gearing it to any conclusions, so we went to great lengths to find a balance — I think we were reasonably successful — on the arguments for and against.

That evidence was brought forward through a full range of witnesses, ranging from government officials involved with the ministries; law enforcement; victims' organizations; those who support offenders, such as The John Howard Society of Canada and the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies; academics; and NGOs. The testimony we heard came from all segments of society that would have interest in these issues.

As I said earlier, having gone through that process, I learned a great deal. I certainly knew more when I came out of the other end of that process than I did when I went in.

As a committee, did we agree on everything; were we unanimous? No, we were not. However, even where there was not agreement, and I was really impressed with this, when issues and suggestions were put forward, the response, without exception, was intelligent and measured. It was not simply, "No, that is it." That worked back and forth on both sides.

In any event, I will leave it at that. With nine previous bills included in Bill C-10, there is obviously a lot to be said, but hopefully that gives honourable senators a feeling of the process we went through to get to this point.

Hon. Joan Fraser: Would Senator Wallace take a question?

Senator Wallace: Certainly.

Senator Fraser: It is a friendly question; we will get into other matters in later debate. Before I put it, I would like to thank him for his kind words about the senators on our side and about me, and I would like to return the compliment. We all know the chair sets the tone in very great measure in committees. Taking us through last week during what were very long hours but basically at a break-neck pace, when one considers that we were looking at nine bills, the chair kept us on track and kept us from losing our tempers or becoming extra emotional when discussing some of the subjects that go to deeply-held principles on both sides. That was not easy. I congratulate the senator on his success.

We all know that senators, no matter how hard they work — and we did work very hard — are lost without the support of our own staff, all of whom I know have been thanked profusely by the individual senators, and rightly so, but also the Senate staff. Our Senate staff support for the committee last week had to be extraordinary. I wonder if Senator Wallace will join me in putting on the record our formal recognition of the extraordinary work and excellent support they gave us, in particular the amazing quantity and quality of work done by our clerk, Shaila Anwar.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Wallace: I truly thank the honourable senator for that question. Absolutely, and our clerk was fabulous — the hours she worked. Emails came to us at midnight; she was tremendous and kept us on track.

I thank the honourable senator as well. As she does many times when there is something that I slip up on, as I just did — I was remiss in not mentioning that — she covers me on my shortcomings. I thank her for that.

The Hon. the Speaker: Continuing debate.

Hon. James S. Cowan (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I will have a slightly longer intervention tomorrow, but today I did want to thank Senator Wallace for what I thought was a very clear and fair explanation of the amendments approved at the committee level and recommended to the house in the report.

I wanted to point out that those were essentially the amendments that had been proposed by the government at third reading in the other place and had been rejected because the Speaker of the other place concluded that they should have been presented, or could have been presented, at committee stage. I would be remiss if I did not point out that they were essentially the same amendments that had been proposed by Irwin Cotler in an attempt to improve one of the good parts of this bill in dealing with terrorism and victims of terrorism, and amendments to the State Indemnity Act.

We on this side were pleased to support those amendments. We were disappointed that the committee did not see fit to support any of the amendments proposed from our side, which in our view would have made the legislation more effective and better able to address the issues the government and all of us want to address, and that is to make our streets and our communities safer.

I will have more to say about that tomorrow, but for today I simply wanted to thank Senator Wallace for his kind words about the work of the committee. I wanted to endorse those words and to thank him for his leadership of the committee and for the clear way in which he presented not only the amendments and the rationale behind them but the observations as well.

As honourable senators participate in the debate — those who were there, particularly last week, and other senators — they will see that some deeply troubling issues are outside the purview of Bill C-10. Perhaps they are outside the purview of the legislative capacity of the Parliament of Canada, but they are issues that are deeply troubling in our society. To the extent that we, as legislators in the federal sphere, can do something about addressing those issues from a legislative point of view, or pointing out those issues and stressing the importance of them to other elements of society, other jurisdictions and those in the non-governmental sector, then we have a responsibility to do that. I hope that we will be able to persuade other honourable senators who were not part of this to take a similar view.

With those words, honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Cowan, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR DEBATE— NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, after holding discussions with the deputy leader of the opposition on setting a period of time for the debate on report stage and third reading of Bill C-10 and failing to agree, I give notice that at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, pursuant to rule 39, a single period of a further six hours of debate, in total, be allocated to dispose of both the report and third reading stages of Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts;

That, if debate on report stage comes to an end before the expiration of the six hours, the Speaker shall put forthwith and successively every question necessary to dispose of report stage in accordance with rule 39(4);

That, if debate on third reading comes to an end before the expiration of the six hours, the Speaker shall put forthwith and successively every question necessary to dispose of third reading in accordance with rule 39(4); and

That at the expiration of the six hours of debate the Speaker shall interrupt, if required, any proceedings then before the Senate and put forthwith and successively all questions necessary to dispose of report stage, if not yet disposed of, and third reading in accordance with rule 39(4).

• (1500)

[English]

**CRIMINAL CODE
CANADA EVIDENCE ACT
SECURITY OF INFORMATION ACT**

BILL TO AMEND—SECOND READING—
DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Linda Frum moved second reading of Bill S-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act.

She said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to initiate the second reading debate on Bill S-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act.

This bill proposes to re-enact the provisions found in former Bill C-17 from the last session of Parliament which focus on the investigative hearing and the recognizance-with-conditions provisions that sunsetted in 2007. It also responds to recommendations of the parliamentary review of the Anti-terrorism Act, which took place between 2004 and 2007, and includes additional improvements to the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act.

I would like to begin my remarks by noting the unique nature of terrorism offences. The Ontario Court of Appeal, in the 2010 decision of *R v. Khawaja* stated that:

To be sure, terrorism is a crime unto itself. It has no equal. It does not stop at, nor is it limited to, the senseless destruction of people and property. It is far more insidious in that it attacks our very way of life and seeks to destroy the fundamental values to which we ascribe — values that form the essence of our constitutional democracy.

Terrorists live by a philosophy that rejects the democratic process and their motivation is fundamentally at odds with the rule of law. Acts of terrorism attack the very fabric of Canada's democratic ideals.

In the post-9/11 environment, the Canadian public expects law enforcement to adopt a proactive posture in order to disrupt terrorist plots before attacks occur. The goal of the Anti-terrorism Act was to prevent terrorist acts before they take place.

We must never become complacent. Canada is in no way immune to radicalization and its potential for violence. One example of homegrown violent extremists here in Canada is the Project OSAGE investigation, better known to many Canadians as the Toronto 18 cases. This investigation led to the arrest of 18 individuals in the summer of 2006. Zakaria Amara, one of the leaders of the Toronto 18, planned what he called the "Battle of Toronto," in which truck bombs would be detonated in the downtown area, destroying the Toronto Stock Exchange and CSIS regional office, causing multiple deaths and injuries. Another bomb would have been detonated at Canadian Forces Base Trenton.

While the terrorism threat continues, it is also evolving and transforming in ways that present new challenges. Another area of increasing concern and focus for this government is the recruitment of Canadians by terrorist groups who urge them to travel overseas to fight and engage in terrorist activity. These young people may not have any links or connections to terrorist groups or activities and may, in fact, be acting alone.

Honourable senators have likely heard of recruiting efforts by groups like Al-Shabab, a terrorist group operating in Somalia. Al-Shabab has one of the most effective Internet recruitment programs developed by extremist groups. It uses the Internet to encourage young people, including young Canadians, to leave their homes to engage in terrorist activities in Somalia and provides training for them in Somalia.

In response to this phenomenon, this bill proposes to create new substantive offences of leaving Canada or attempting to leave Canada to commit various existing terrorism offences. It would now be a specific offence to leave Canada or attempt to leave Canada to: (a) participate in any activity of a terrorist group; (b) facilitate a terrorist activity; (c) commit an indictable offence for the benefit of a terrorist group; and (d) commit an indictable offence that is also a terrorist activity.

The offence of leaving Canada or attempting to leave Canada to participate in any activity of a terrorist group would carry a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment. The other new offences would carry maximum penalties of 14 years imprisonment.

As noted previously, the horrific nature of terrorism requires a proactive and preventive approach. These new offences will allow law enforcement to continue to intervene at an early stage in the planning process to prevent terrorist acts from being carried out. The new offences would send a strong deterrent message, would potentially assist with threat mitigation and would make available a higher maximum penalty than would otherwise apply.

In addition to the creation of these new offences, the bill proposes an amendment to the harbouring offence, currently found in section 83.23 of the Criminal Code, to change the maximum penalty from 10 to 14 years where the applicable terrorist activity constitutes a terrorism offence for which the person is liable to imprisonment for life. In all other cases, the maximum penalty for section 83.23 would remain 10 years. A similar change would be made to section 21 of the Security of Information Act, which is the offence of harbouring or concealing someone who commits an offence under the act.

This change would bring section 83.23 of the Criminal Code in line with the general accessory-after-the-fact provisions in section 23 of the Criminal Code. Currently, the accessory-after-the-fact provisions in the Criminal Code state that if a person aids another person who has committed an offence that has a maximum punishment of life imprisonment, then the person who is the accessory can be liable to receive a maximum penalty of 14 years.

In addition to these Criminal Code amendments, the bill seeks to re-enact, but with more safeguards, the investigative hearing and recognizance-with-conditions provisions that expired

pursuant to a sunset clause in March 2007. Since their expiry, three attempts have been made to re-enact these provisions. This is the fourth. The first two attempts died on the Order Paper due to the dissolution of Parliament. In September 2010, Bill C-17 received second reading in the House of Commons, was considered and amended by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, and was reported back to the House of Commons in March 2011. However, it, too, died and the Order Paper with the dissolution of Parliament last March.

These amendments in Bill S-7 are exactly the same as proposed in the former Bill C-17 as introduced on April 23, 2010, in the previous Parliament. These proposals would be in keeping with some recommendations of the 2006 interim report of the House of Commons Subcommittee on the Review of the Anti-terrorism Act and the 2007 report of the Special Senate Committee on the Anti-terrorism Act and would include the Senate amendments made to the former Bill C-17's predecessor, Bill S-3, in the Thirty-ninth Parliament.

• (1510)

Honourable senators, the investigative hearing and the recognizance with conditions generally focus on the proactive intervention in and prevention of a terrorism offence or a terrorist activity.

As to the investigative hearing, the bill proposes creating a power to require individuals who may have information about a terrorism offence that has been or will be committed to appear before a judge for an investigative hearing. The objective is not to prosecute an individual for a Criminal Code offence but rather to gather information. It is significant to note that, as a safeguard, any information obtained in this context cannot be used for self-incrimination of the witness.

Under the provision, a peace officer, with the prior consent of the appropriate Attorney General, can apply to a superior court or a provincial court judge for an order for the gathering of information under the following conditions: if there are reasonable grounds to believe that a terrorism offence has or will be committed; if there are reasonable grounds to believe that information concerning the offence or the whereabouts of a suspect is likely to be obtained as a result of the order; and if reasonable attempts have been made to obtain such information by other means.

If granted, such a court order would compel a person to attend a hearing to answer questions on examination and could include instructions for the person to bring along anything in his or her possession.

In addition, proposed section 83.28 states that any person ordered to attend an investigative hearing is entitled to retain and instruct counsel at any stage of the proceedings. The person will be required to answer questions but may refuse to do so on the basis of laws relating to disclosure or privilege. The presiding judge will rule on any such refusal. The investigatory hearing provision survived a Supreme Court constitutional challenge in

the 2004 reference, re Application, pertaining to the Air India prosecution. The court held that the investigative hearing was not inconsistent with an individual's absolute right to silence and the right against self-incrimination.

The court noted the specific protections governing use and derivative use immunity as an important safeguard in the original legislation.

Proposed section 83.29, which remains substantially similar to the earlier provisions, states that a person who evades service of the order, is about to abscond, or fails to attend an examination may be subject to arrest with a warrant. However, proposed subsection 83.29(4) adds that section 707 of the Criminal Code, which sets out a maximum period of 90 days detention for witnesses who are arrested in order to ensure their attendance in court — such as in the case of an absconding witness — also applies to individuals detained for a hearing under proposed section 83.29. This makes crystal clear that there is a limit to the period of time for which a person can be detained pursuant to the warrant.

Proposed section 83.3 is designed to re-enact the recognizance with conditions, which aims to disrupt, at a nascent stage, a potential terrorist attack. Under this section, with the prior consent of the appropriate Attorney General, a peace officer may lay an information before a provincial court judge if he or she believes, on reasonable grounds, that a terrorist activity will be carried out and suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the imposition of a recognizance with conditions or the arrest of a person is required to prevent it. This second criterion is not one of mere suspicion; it is one of "suspects on reasonable grounds." In other words, this standard is higher than just a mere hunch.

That judge may order the person to appear before any provincial court judge, whereas the original version of this subsection stated that the judge may order the person to appear before him or her. This change is similar to one suggested by the House of Commons subcommittee during the parliamentary review.

There are only two situations in which a peace officer may arrest the person without or warrant to bring the person before a judge to have the judge decide if the recognizance with conditions should be imposed: first, where the grounds to lay an information exist but there are exigent circumstances; or second, where an information has been laid and a summons has already been issued, but the person has not yet appeared before the court. In both cases, the peace officer must suspect, on reasonable grounds, that the detention of the person in custody is necessary to prevent a terrorist activity.

Such a detained person must then be brought before a provincial court judge within 24 hours or as soon as feasible thereafter. At that time, a show cause hearing must be held to determine if the person should be released or detained for a further period of time. This hearing itself can be adjourned only for a further 48 hours.

As well, the bill contains an important amendment that was made by the Special Senate Committee on the Anti-terrorism Act when it examined former Bill S-3. The committee deleted the

words “any other just cause and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing” that were present in the original wording of paragraph 83.3 (7)(c) of the Criminal Code in order to bring this provision into line with the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in *R. v. Hall* in 2002. In that decision, the Supreme Court struck down a section of the Criminal Code with similar wording in the bail context as a violation of sections 7 and 11(e) of the Charter.

If the judge determines that there is no need for the person to enter into a recognizance, the person is to be released. If it is determined that the person should enter into a recognizance, the person is bound to keep the peace and respect other reasonable conditions for up to 12 months. If the person refuses to enter into such a recognizance, the judge can order that person to be imprisoned for up to 12 months. This penalty is comparable to the penalty for other peace bonds.

Honourable senators, some have maintained that these tools are not necessary since they were never used after they were created in 2001. However, just because they were not used before does not mean they are not needed now.

As well, one can take comfort in the fact that, based on past experience with the previous provisions, law enforcement officials demonstrated caution and restraint in the use of these provisions.

Honourable senators, another criticism has been that the recognizance with conditions provision is unnecessary because other Criminal Code provisions could be used instead, especially the police power, under subsection 495(1)(a) of the Criminal Code, to arrest, without warrant, someone who is about to commit an indictable offence. This view fails, however, to appreciate the purpose of the recognizance with conditions provision. This tool is designed to disrupt the planning of a terrorist activity at an early stage.

An example of this is where law enforcement have information that a terrorist activity will be carried out, but they do not have reasonable grounds to believe that a person is about to commit an indictable offence, even though they may have a reasonable suspicion that the person is involved in planning the terrorist activity.

In situations such as this, a peace officer may lay an information before a judge if he or she believes, on reasonable grounds, that a terrorist activity will be carried out and suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the imposition of a recognizance with conditions on a person or the arrest of the person is necessary to prevent the carrying out of the terrorist activity.

The bill also proposes changes to the Canada Evidence Act. Pursuant to section 38.13 of this act, the Attorney General of Canada can personally issue a certificate prohibiting the disclosure of information for the purpose of protecting information obtained in confidence from, or in relation to, a foreign entity, as defined in subsection 2(1) of the Security of Information Act or for the purpose of protecting national defence or national security.

The House of Commons Subcommittee on the Review of the Anti-terrorism Act, in its final report in 2007, recommended reducing the duration of this certificate. Thus, in response to

recommendation 35 of the subcommittee’s report, Bill S-7 proposes that the duration of the Attorney General’s certificate be reduced from 15 years to 10 years. The certificate may be reissued by the Attorney General of Canada, pursuant to subsection 38.13(9).

As well, the Attorney General of Canada may issue a fiat to take over any prosecution where sensitive or potentially injurious information, as defined in the Canada Evidence Act, is involved. The House subcommittee recommended that the Canada Evidence Act be amended to require the Attorney General of Canada to table, in Parliament, an annual report on the usage of the fiat and certificate provisions.

In the government response to the House of Commons Subcommittee on the Review of the Anti-terrorism Act, the government signaled its acceptance of this suggestion, with a view to enhancing transparency, and is now following through with the inclusion of legislative provisions in this bill that would implement this recommendation. To date, neither the certificate nor the fiat has been used.

• (1520)

Finally, it is proposed that amendments to the Canada Evidence Act be made in order to reflect the judgment of the Federal Court in the case of *Toronto Star Newspapers Ltd. v. Canada* which was released on February 5, 2007. In this case the court took the remedial action of reading down certain provisions so that the mandatory confidentiality requirement applies only to the *ex parte* hearings under the regime.

In a further effort to enhance transparency and respect the open court principle, these proposals would seek to amend the Canada Evidence Act to allow the Federal Court to order that applications to it with respect to the disclosure of sensitive or potentially injurious information could be made public, although they would also allow the court to order that hearings related to those applications be heard in private.

Honourable senators, I should note that the bill also proposes a number of technical amendments, some of which respond to recommendations of the 2006 and 2007 reports of the Parliamentary Review of the Anti-terrorism Act.

The Government of Canada has no more fundamental duty than to protect the personal safety of our citizens and to defend against threats to our national security. Let me close by urging all honourable senators to support this bill and, in doing so, to contribute to the safety and security of Canadians.

[Translation]

Hon. Roméo Antonius Dallaire: I have a question for Senator Frum if she still has enough time.

[English]

Very good. I am not sure whether the honourable senator is of a legal background or not.

Senator Frum: Fortunately or unfortunately, I am not.

Senator Dallaire: Then this will be quite an extraordinary experience: a soldier and a non-legal person handling the Criminal Code. It will be in good hands, I am sure.

In the honourable senator's presentation, it was the premise that this bill will be a tool to prevent terrorism acts. It is a proactive instrument, of which we have very few, in the defence of the nation. We are often reactive.

I believe this is very much in line with the new concept of intelligence-based policing that has been introduced. When I sat on the a national police advisory board with Chief Justice Antonio Lamer and Minister Fantino, we went through a lot of the needs to meet that intelligence-based policing. It is there to try to prevent crimes from happening, versus simply reacting to them. There is a very positive synergy there.

There is also the concern of national security and individual rights of the citizen, and that balance in the tools put in the hands of government. In so doing, it comes down to the question of the threat and if it requires such a tool to ensure our security.

Can the honourable senator tell me, even with the new strategy published by the government this month, whether or not she has had access to the classified threat assessments? Has any parliamentarian, either in the other place or here, had access to these classified intelligence sources in order for us to be able to take at least the first step of any operation in which we might have to use force which is an analysis of the intelligence threat? Does the honourable senator have access to that, in particular? If not, does she not think it would be a fundamental requirement in order to make an assessment of this that we get access to it and that we are given new powers to have access to classified information in order to perhaps oversee the intelligence structure of this nation by parliamentarians?

Senator Frum: I thank the honourable senator. I look forward to working with him on this.

No, I do not have access to that classified information. Frankly, as a regular citizen reading the newspaper, I am aware everyday that somewhere in this world there are terrorist activities that are going on and there is no reason to assume that Canada will be exempt from these.

As I mentioned in my lengthy speech, we know these provisions are preventive and proactive provisions that have never been used when they were in place before. They are just a form of an insurance policy so that if something extraordinary happens, then law enforcement has the tools at their hands to use if necessary. One has to be able to prevent and anticipate that something could happen. That is what these provisions are there to do.

Senator Dallaire: Following on that, Bill C-17 has been reshaped and the honourable senator has gone through the history of this bill. I think it is worthy that we do bring it to the fore, but there is a whole new angle to it: the recruitment of Canadians who might go overseas and participate in terrorism activities, being training camps or being equipped to conduct

terrorism acts overseas or maybe to come back with those skills. We are aware that there has been recruitment going on. The honourable senator has used an example, and the recruitment is being done on youths under the age of 18.

Where does the honourable senator think we will be able to balance the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the definition of a terrorist, and the provisions of our Youth Criminal Justice Act which might be affected by this bill? Does she see those things being brought together in what she has been reading so far?

Senator Frum: There is no specific provision for that in this bill, as the honourable senator knows. I am sure it is something we will spend a lot of time talking about in committee.

[Translation]

Senator Dallaire: I am eager to have the opportunity to thoroughly examine these issues in committee. We must take the time required to do so in order to ensure that we have a useful tool that does not infringe on individual rights.

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Jaffer had a question, and then maybe we will take the adjournment.

Hon. Mobina S.B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I have a question for the honourable senator. I want to thank her for her second reading presentation. I listened to her very carefully and I can say with a lot of confidence that there is no one in this chamber who does not want to keep our country safe. That is obviously the foremost thing in all our minds.

I was also struck by how the honourable senator spoke about keeping, if I am not mistaken, all Canadians safe. That is also my concern, as it is hers, but we are very much aware — certainly with the Toronto 18 — that we do have homegrown terrorists. That is something we have to work toward because obviously they are Canadians and we have to find a way to reach out to them.

I have not had the privilege of studying the bill as well as the honourable senator has, so may I ask her if there is a balance trying to be reached in this bill that balances the rights of all Canadians?

Senator Frum: Yes, one of the major focuses of this bill is actually on Canadians who are leaving Canada to commit terrorism offences elsewhere. We have an international responsibility to do what we can to implement measures that will not just prevent terrorism attacks from happening here and injuring our own citizens, but injuring anyone around the world. That is the primary focus of this legislation, to answer to our responsibilities to the rest of the world.

Senator Jaffer: The honourable senator and I, and everyone here, are very much aware — it is not something we are not proud of — that mainly young men are joining Al-Shabab and going to Somalia. We are all aware of it.

• (1530)

I have had the opportunity to speak to some of these young men in Kenya when they arrive from Canada. I have asked them why they would leave our great country and do what they are doing. One of the things they said was that they have not felt included in our great country's fabric. However, I have not had the opportunity to study the bill as well as the honourable senator has, and I have not had the opportunity to hear from officials as she has, so I ask her once again if there is a balance in this bill. Yes, we have to protect our citizens, but to protect them we have to ensure that all our citizens feel a part of this country. Is there a balance in this bill, or is it all about instituting anti-terrorism policies?

Senator Frum: I would have to say that it is all about instituting anti-terrorism policies. Other kinds of societal programs, such as education and outreach, are not within the scope of this bill.

(On motion of Senator Dallaire, debate adjourned.)

INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN FOUNDATIONS IN CANADA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Eaton calling the attention of the Senate to the interference of foreign foundations in Canada's domestic affairs and their abuse of Canada's existing Revenue Canada Charitable status.

Hon. John D. Wallace: Honourable senators, I rise today to speak to the inquiry of my colleague, Senator Eaton, on the interference of foreign foundations in Canada's domestic affairs and their abuse of Canada's existing Revenue Canada Charitable status.

Honourable senators, having reviewed and given serious consideration to the matters raised by Senator Eaton's inquiry, I must say that I have great concern over what I consider to be a serious and significant deficiency or gap in the current tax laws that govern registered charitable organizations. This gap or deficiency directly concerns the current public disclosure requirements, or, more to the point, the absolute total lack thereof, that relates to both the source and the amounts of financial donations that are able to be made by a foreign foundation to a Canadian registered charitable organization for the purpose of funding that charity's political activities. I will explain further, and hopefully the following information will be of assistance to honourable senators.

Under the mandate of the Canada Revenue Agency, the federal Income Tax Act requires charities to be registered in order to maintain their tax exempt status. As I know all honourable senators are well aware, the Income Tax Act also provides various specific tax incentives for both individuals and corporate taxpayers who make gifts and donations to registered Canadian charities. The payment of these charitable donations to registered

charities effectively reduces the amount of tax that would otherwise be payable by the taxpayer in that taxation year, whether in the form of a refundable tax credit for an individual donor or a charitable donation tax deduction from taxable income for a corporate donor. In either case, because both refundable tax credits and charitable donation tax reductions have the effect of reducing the amount of tax the taxpayer in question would otherwise be required to pay to Revenue Canada, the direct consequence is that all such reductions in income tax that would be otherwise payable effectively represent the amount of financial support that the federal government is providing on behalf of the taxpayers of this country to support the charitable activities of the particular charity in question.

Consequently, since Canadian registered charitable organizations are actually being funded both directly and indirectly by the general public, that is, the Canadian taxpayer by individual private donations as well as the federal government's charitable tax incentives, I strongly believe that all Canadian citizens have a direct vested interest in the operations and activities of these Canadian charitable organizations.

Honourable senators, to assist you in better understanding the relationship that currently exists between registered Canadian charities and the activities, including the provision of funding from foreign foundations, I will provide a brief overview of some of the requirements and restrictions that relate to "Canadian registered charities, charitable organizations, charitable purposes and activities" as well as what is known as "other permitted related activities," which do include — and I repeat, do include — within prescribed limitations certain permitted "political activities" by our Canadian registered charities.

I want to begin with what is meant by the term "charity." "Charity" is defined in the Income Tax Act as "charitable organization" or "charitable foundation." A charitable organization as regulated by the Canada Revenue Agency must have "exclusively charitable purposes" and devote all of its resources to what is referred to as charitable activities in support of those purposes. In the context of Senator Eaton's inquiry, and more specifically in respect of what Revenue Canada considers to be charitable purposes and charitable activities, the term "charitable" is not defined in the Income Tax Act. Instead, the common law or decided case law has determined that for purposes and activities to be considered charitable, they must fall within one or more of the following categories: first, the relief of poverty; second, the advancement of education and/or religion; and third, purposes that would be "beneficial to the community" and that do not fall within any of the preceding categories. Examples of these purposes beneficial to the community include relieving a condition associated with aging, preventing and relieving sickness, providing public amenities or providing counselling for people in distress.

Honourable senators, I realize that this discussion about definitions of charitable and charitable purposes and activities not only seems to be but is, in fact, more than somewhat tedious. However, I believe it is important that each of us has some basic understanding of what Canadian registered charitable organizations are permitted to do, particularly regarding their potential participation and involvement in "political activities," to which I will speak more in a moment.

It is also important to appreciate that a Canadian registered charitable organization, within certain permitted limits, may be involved with "other activities." However, these other permitted activities must relate directly to that particular charity's registered charitable purpose and be a reasonable means of achieving it. These other related activities include such things as business and social fundraising activities and, of particular note for the purpose of Senator Eaton's inquiry, political activities. For all honourable senators to have an informed understanding of the potential interplay between these political activities of Canadian registered charitable organizations and the activity and provision of funding to these organizations by foreign foundations, one of the key questions to be answered is this: What political activities can a Canadian registered charitable organization be involved in?

The Income Tax Act has established limits on the legally permissible political activities of charitable organizations. Specifically, these political activities must be nonpartisan and connected and incidental to the registered charitable purpose of the charitable organization in question, and the organization must devote what is referred to as "substantially all of its resources" to its registered charitable purpose.

• (1540)

Furthermore, in this regard, honourable senators, political activities undertaken by Canadian registered charitable organizations must not include direct or indirect support of or opposition to any political party or candidate for public office.

Perhaps the most widely accepted definition of political purposes that are not considered charitable is contained in the leading 1981 case of *McGovern v. Attorney General*, which refers in this regard to a direct and principal purpose that is either to further the interests of a particular political party or to procure changes in the laws of the country or to procure a reversal of government policy or particular decisions of governmental authorities in this country. Once again, these are political purposes that are not to be considered charitable.

Additionally, honourable senators, Canadian courts will not characterize an entity as a charitable organization or permit it to maintain its charitable status under the Income Tax Act if a substantial part of the charity's activities are devoted to political purposes — I repeat, a substantial part of a charity's activities.

Another question that needs to be addressed is what are the monetary limits, if any, that can be spent by a Canadian registered charitable organization on political activities that are considered permissible by Revenue Canada?

These monetary limits and the conditions attached to these limits are set out in Canada Revenue Agency Policy Statement CPS-022. To summarize briefly, they are as follows: When a charity takes part in political activities and, as previously stated, the Income Tax Act does require that substantially all of its resources must be devoted to charitable activities. The term "resources" is not defined in the act but is considered by Revenue Canada to include the total of a charity's financial assets, as well as everything the charity can use to further its purposes such as staff, volunteers, directors and its premises and equipment.

In this regard, honourable senators, it becomes very apparent that, in respect of any particular registered charitable organization, the dollar value of its resources can be considerable indeed.

Revenue Canada normally considers "substantially all of its resources" to mean 90 per cent or more. Therefore, as a general rule, a charitable organization that devotes no more than 10 per cent of its total resources a year to political activities is generally considered to be operating within the "substantially all" requirement. Smaller charities with annual incomes of less than \$200,000 can, on a sliding scale, devote from between 12 to 20 per cent of their resources to permissible political activities.

Canadian charities are able to receive donations from non-resident individuals and non-resident charities.

Furthermore, Canadian charities and private and public foundations are required to report on their annual information return to Canada Revenue Agency any donations or gifts of any kind that are valued at \$10,000 or more and are received from any donor not resident in Canada.

Honourable senators, currently there are no limitations regulating the amounts a Canadian registered charitable organization can accept in the form of donations from foreign foundations. All such donations received from foreign foundations are nowhere to be found on any record that is publicly accessible in this country. There is currently no public disclosure requirement in this regard. There is absolutely no public transparency.

Under current Canadian law, substantial financial contributions can be provided by foreign corporations to a Canadian registered charitable organization in order to fund permissible political activities of that particular charity and, as a consequence, thereby directly influence the domestic public affairs of this country. To think that all of this can presently occur with the foreign foundation's involvement being entirely removed from any public scrutiny or knowledge, honourable senators, is totally unacceptable.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

Senator Wallace: In any given year, a foreign foundation could effectively provide the entire political activities funding requirement of a Canadian registered charitable organization and, as I stated previously, the total amount of this political activities funding could be up to 10 per cent of the total dollar amount of a charitable organization's total resources, which could be a considerable amount indeed.

I submit to you, honourable senators, that all Canadian citizens have the right to know, and even more than that, must have the opportunity to know, the extent of the potential involvement by foreign foundations in the financial affairs of Canadian registered charitable organizations. Only then will all Canadian citizens be in a position to pass their own personal, independent judgment on the nature and extent of the political activities and motives of Canadian registered charitable organizations and the foreign foundations that provide them with financial support.

Honourable senators, the Canadian public, the Canadian taxpayer, is entitled to absolutely nothing less.

(On motion of Senator Tardif, for Senator Mitchell, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Greene, calling the attention of the Senate to the modernization of the practices and procedures of the Senate Chamber with a focus on private members bills.

Hon. Claude Carignan (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the debate on this inquiry is at day 15. However, important aspects of Senator Greene's speech must be addressed. Consequently, I move the adjournment of the debate for the remainder of my time.

(On motion of Senator Carignan, debate adjourned.)

[English]

EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the inquiry of the Honourable Senator Champagne, P.C., calling the attention of the Senate to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Hon. Terry Stratton: If I may, honourable senators, I would like to speak to this, but I just have not had the time. I have other things in my life right now that I would prefer to do. I would ask, very gently, permission from you to adjourn for the balance of my time.

(On motion of Senator Stratton, debate adjourned.)

• (1550)

DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND

INQUIRY—DEBATE SUSPENDED

Hon. Mac Harb rose pursuant to notice of December 6, 2011:

That he will call the attention of the Senate to the importance of Canada playing a proactive role in bringing about the successful conclusion to the Doha Development Round.

He said: Honourable senators, 10 years ago, the launch of the WTO Doha Development Round was big news around the world. Its goal was to reform the way the global trading system worked,

leveling the playing field for developing countries by giving them better access to developed countries' markets. Today the world's poorest nations are still waiting for any substantive progress on those important promises.

At the WTO ministerial conference in Geneva this past December, trade ministers acknowledged that the Doha negotiations were at an impasse. This is sobering news as the world struggles to drag itself out of the worst financial crisis in almost a century. Growing tensions between have and have-not countries are now matched by the similar tensions amongst the have and have-not classes within even the richest countries. The Occupy movement was born out of those tensions.

By failing to advance the Doha Round, we are failing the world's poorest countries that are caught in a hopeless poverty trap, leaving the door open to a potential global crisis.

As honourable senators may be aware, the Doha Development Round's goal was to stimulate growth, opportunity, and wealth in developing countries through trade facilitations. However, disagreements between the developed and developing nations have stalled the talks, with a series of attempts to revive the round ending, so far, in failure. Over the past 10 years, the WTO's traditional consensus-building process has been severely limited by the increasing number of players and the growing complexity of the items on the table.

At the Geneva ministerial meeting in July 2008, the Doha Round came close to an agreement on tariff cuts for industrial goods and agricultural products, and a comprehensive package of farm reform in developed countries. This package would have gone further than any other previous multilateral trade agreement, but the 2008 ministerial meeting broke down over a disagreement between the exporters of agricultural bulk commodities and countries with large numbers of subsistence farmers. At the time, a strong effort was made to reduce the levels of trade-distorting subsidies that rich countries provide to their farmers. Those policies were boosting the incomes of farmers in rich countries at the expense of farmers in developing countries who faced suppressed global prices and having to compete without the benefit of subsidies.

The British Fairtrade Foundation put out a report last year showing that the \$47 billion U.S. in subsidies paid to most developed countries' producers in the past 10 years have created barriers for the 15 million cotton farmers across West Africa trying to trade their way out of poverty. It also reported that five million of the world's poorest farming families have been forced out of business and into deeper poverty because of those subsidies. We hear of farmers in the poorest countries forced to sell their cows because they simply cannot compete with the low prices of the subsidized Western milk that is flooding their markets.

It is not just the dairy farmers; other commodity subsidies add to global food prices, dampening incentives for developing countries to invest in agriculture.

It was not surprising that in 2008, within weeks of the subsidy-laden farm bill passing in the United States, the Doha Round collapsed, and it has been on life support every since.

[Senator Wallace]

The WTO has also failed to clarify the ambiguous rules on concluding trade agreements, and this ambiguity puts the poorest countries at a disadvantage. In Africa, in negotiations with the EU, for example, countries have been forced to eliminate tariffs on up to 90 per cent of their trade because no clear rules exist to protect them.

Not only are the least developed countries suffering as a result of outdated WTO rules, but a study by the International Food Policy Research Institute estimated that if all WTO members were to raise their applied tariff on goods to the maximum level currently allowed under WTO rules, world income would fall by US\$353 billion.

Even in a more conservative scenario in which all countries only raised their tariff to the highest level they have applied since 1995, the loss to the global output would be US\$134 billion.

However, if we can find what it takes to move this deal forward and reduce those tariffs, the European Commission reports that world exports could rise by more than half a trillion dollars a year, lifting global economic growth by 0.2 per cent.

Therefore, getting the Doha Round done would be a win-win for global trade in developed and developing countries alike, but still we wait.

While we wait, the lack of progress on the multilateral level has caused the trading focus to shift from Geneva to individual capitals. We now see more and more governments concluding bilateral and regional trade and investment agreements. Canada is one of those countries, with a high-profile Canada-EU deal in the works, ongoing trade talks with India and, more recently, an expressed interest to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade talks with the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and other Asian countries, to name only a few.

Canada is not alone. In fact, since 2001, the United States has signed trade agreements with Australia, Bahrain, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Peru, Singapore — and the list goes on. In the same period, the European Union has done similar deals elsewhere.

All to say that because of the lack of trust in the multilateral trading system, we are moving to bilateral and regional trading systems. When U.S. President Obama made a commitment late last fall to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, European business leaders stepped up to ask for a similar initiative across the North Atlantic to spur economic growth and create jobs. While the WTO encourages bilateral trade agreements, WTO members may be worrying if the United States and the EU are starting talks on bilateral pacts.

Washington and Brussels have given up on the Doha Round. Indeed, the flood of bilateral deals appears to be a sign that the world is turning away from the development commitments of the Doha Round and the needs of our poorest neighbours in the process.

This trend raises some serious concerns. Statistics show that over the years the Doha Round has been stalled, the least developed countries have sunk deeper and deeper into trade deficit. For example, statistics show that Ethiopia sunk from a

trade deficit of US\$1.1 billion in 2002 to a \$5.79 billion deficit in 2010.

At the same time, the world's richest countries have prospered with growing trade surpluses. Germany's surplus, for example, rose in the same period from US\$121 billion to US\$217 billion in 2010. In Japan, surplus climbed to more than \$128 billion from \$92 billion in 2002.

Another impediment to the talks is that more issues are being put on the table, issues that do not directly relate to the original development aspects of the Doha Round. The South African minister of trade recently noted in a statement:

... that the US and others have now put forward a whole set of new proposals to move away from development mandate ... and instead want new issues — climate change, energy, investment ... which threaten to shift attention to these issues which have a greater appeal to developed countries than developing countries.

[Translation]

We simply have to understand that we are teetering on the brink if we fail to make real progress. Economists around the world have been sounding the alarm. In a report produced this past April, Richard Baldwin, professor of international economics at the Graduate Institute of Geneva and Simon J. Evenett, professor of international trade at the University of Gallen in Switzerland, have done their best to highlight the perils of further delay. They argue that failure on the Doha Development Round could result in, first, an undermining of the WTO dispute settlement mechanism; second, an advance of regionalism that will fill the vacuum left by the WTO's inability to make progress, thus further undermining the WTO's centrality in global trade governance; third, a rise of protectionism that will almost certainly be encouraged by an erosion of the WTO authority; fourth, a blow to least developed nations for whom the Doha package would have provided important gains; and fifth, a blow to agricultural exporters who were counting on Doha to rebalance the world's treatment of industrial and agricultural goods.

Honourable senators, we are already seeing the impact of this sustained imbalance in countries around the world: the erosion of the middle class and higher unemployment. There is a dangerous trend. Economic migration from least developed countries to developed countries is creating pressure on the system and depriving developing countries. . .

[English]

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, pursuant to the order adopted by the Senate, it being 4 p.m., I will have to declare the Senate continued. I remind the Honourable Senator Harb that his inquiry remains standing on the Notice Paper and that he has another five minutes when we call that item again.

Honourable senators, I declare the Senate continued until Thursday, March 1, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.

(Debate suspended.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, March 1, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.)

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